

HISTORY  
OF  
THE DOCTRINE  
OF THE  
IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

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BY ELD. D. M. CANRIGHT.

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Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. COLOSSIANS 2:8.

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## PREFACE.

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IT is with earnest prayer to God that I send forth this little book, hoping that it may be useful in the cause of truth. Very many candid and pious minds are coming to be satisfied that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is not taught in the Bible; yet it is quite generally held by Christians. It is, therefore, both interesting and important to know how this doctrine came into the church, who has believed it, and who has not. To answer these questions is the object of these pages.

I have studied long, and read extensively, to gather the facts here presented. I have been brief in my comments, and in my quotations, to avoid making a bulky book. My other labors, and my lack of opportunities to have access to libraries, have not allowed me to be as full and make my points as strong in some places as I would like to have done, and as I know can be done. If the Lord will, I shall do this in a future edition. I have used much care in my quotations and references, so that they may be relied upon.

It seemed to me that such a work as this was needed. While much has been written upon the Bible argument

concerning the nature of man, very few and meager have been the productions upon the historical argument. Indeed, I have never seen anything written upon several of the points here noticed. I hope, therefore, it may be of some little use to the friends of truth.

D. M. CANRIGHT.

*Monroe, Iowa, 1870.*





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# THE HISTORY.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL NOT UNIVERSALLY BELIEVED.

It is commonly asserted by the believers in the immortality of the soul, that this doctrine has been believed in all ages by all people.<sup>1</sup> This is regarded as a strong presumptive argument that it is true. But such a conclusion would not be at all necessary, as we know that the masses of the world have always been in error, while but a very small portion have had the truth. Jesus said, "Fear not, *little flock*." The way to life is very narrow, and few walk in it; while the way to death is wide, and many walk therein. If men had always decided a thing to be true because the majority believed it, or false because but few received it, truth would have stood but a sorry show. The great philosopher, John Locke, once said: "An error is not the better for being common, nor truth the worse for having been neglected; and if it were put to the vote anywhere in the world, I doubt, as things are managed, whether truth would have the majority, at least while the au-

<sup>1</sup>See Dick's *Philosophy of a Future State*, Chap. i, § 1, p. 17.  
D. W. Clarke, *Man all Immortal*, p. 113; Lee on the Soul, pp. 74, 75  
Immortality.

thority of men, and not the examination of things, must be its measure."<sup>1</sup> The history of the world shows this to be true. The pre-existence of souls, the transmigration of souls, the rejection of the resurrection of the body, idolatry,—these points have been held by the majority of mankind.

The doctrine of the *transmigration of souls* is manifestly a false doctrine; yet a large majority of the human race has always believed it. It teaches that the soul lived before it came into this world, and that, when this body dies, the soul will pass into another body, and then into another, till it is finally re-absorbed into God, from whom it came.

We all readily agree that this is an error; yet it has obtained a general belief among mankind. Of this fact there is an abundance of proof, though my limits will allow me to offer but little. Says the New American Cyclopaedia, Art. Metempsychosis, "This idea [of the transmigration of souls] belongs to the oldest religion of India and Egypt, and is one of the earliest forms in which the doctrine of immortality appears. . . . It is a prominent feature in the system of Brahmanism and Buddhism. . . . The idea appears in the tenets of the Gnostics and the Manicheans, and of some other heretical sects. It was also a part of the doctrine of the Druids, and is still believed by the Druses and various other tribes in Western Asia and Africa." Says Dr. Horne: "The Tartars and American Indians believe in the transmigration of human souls into the bodies of beasts."<sup>2</sup> Of the Chinese, he says: "The absurd

<sup>1</sup>Essay on Human Knowledge, Book IV, Chap. iii, § 6, Note.

<sup>2</sup>Introduction, Vol. I, Chap. i, p. 21.



notion of the transmigration of souls into other bodies is universal."<sup>1</sup>

The above-named nations alone constitute a majority of the human race. They have held, and still hold, this absurd doctrine. Adam Clarke says: "Most of the Asiatic nations have believed in the doctrine of transmigration." "It was pretty general both among Greeks and Asiatics."<sup>2</sup> "The Mexicans believed also in the transmigration of souls."<sup>3</sup> Bishop Warburton makes this broad statement concerning the belief of the ancients, and the facts justify the statement: "The doctrine of the metempsychosis as it signified a moral designation of Providence, came originally from Egypt, and was, as we have said, believed by all mankind."<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Alger says: "No other doctrine has exerted so extensive, controlling, and permanent, an influence upon mankind as that of the metempsychosis. . . . Such a theory, well matured, bore unresisted sway through the great Eastern world long before Moses slept in his little ark of bulrushes on the shores of the Egyptian river; Alexander the Great gazed with amazement on the self-immolation by fire to which it inspired the Gymnosophists; Cæsar found its tenets propagated among the Gauls beyond the Rubicon; and at this hour it reigns despotic, as the learned and traveled professor of Sanscrit at Oxford tells us, without any sign of decrepitude or decay, over the Burman, Chinese, Tartar, Tibetan, and Indian, nations, including at least six hundred and fifty millions of mankind."<sup>5</sup> This alone includes nearly two-thirds of the human race.

<sup>1</sup>Ibid. <sup>2</sup>Com. on John 9: 2. <sup>3</sup>Elements of Mythology, p. 232.

<sup>4</sup>Divine Legation of Moses, Vol. II, p. 150.

<sup>5</sup>Future Life, Part 5, Chap. ii, p. 475.

All the heathens and many Christians who have argued for the immortality of the soul, have, with it, believed in the transmigration of souls. Thus writes an eminent author: "Certain it is that those philosophers who argued for the immortality of the soul universally held its pre-existence before it animated the human body, and laid the stress of the argument for its eternal existence after its departure from the body, upon its existence from times immemorial, or even from everlasting before its entrance into it."<sup>1</sup>

What will our friends say to these facts? If universal belief would prove the immortality of the soul, it will as clearly prove the transmigration of souls! for the latter has been generally believed, as I have shown above.

But has the present doctrine of the immortality of the soul been the common sentiment of mankind? *It has not. Very few have believed it.* Of this there is an abundance of proof, of which I can present but a small part, on account of my limits. We do not deny that all nations have always had some ideas and traditions of a future life of some kind; but that by no means proves that they believed the soul immortal. We firmly believe in a future life, yet we do not believe in the immortality of the soul. When heathens and barbarians are found holding some ideas and traditions of a future life, even though they be the most vague and indistinct, they are immediately claimed as orthodox believers in the soul's immortality! This does not follow at all, as it often happens that they themselves cannot tell how they expect to obtain such a life; nay, the traditions of many of them show that they expect to

<sup>1</sup>Leland's Revelation, Vol. II, Part 3, Chap. v, p. 328.



live there with the same material persons that they have here, and not simply as immaterial spirits.

But let us bear in mind what the present orthodox doctrine of the immortality of the soul is, for which the universal belief is claimed. It teaches that every man has given to him at birth an immaterial, spiritual, immortal soul, which simply lives in this body as in a house or cage. This soul, whether righteous or wicked, will live eternally as an individual, personal, conscious soul. It will never die, nor lose its personality. Such a doctrine it is claimed has been the common sentiment of mankind. This we deny, and now offer the proof. Of the Gentiles Paul says that they were without God, and having no hope. Eph. 2: 12. If they had believed the soul immortal, they would have had a hope of a future life; but they had no such hope, hence no such faith. When we go back a few centuries before Christ, to the early ages of the world, in the infancy of such nations as the Greeks and Romans, we find no evidence that the immortality of the soul was believed among them. It cannot be proved that they did believe it. All their ideas and traditions of a future world represent it as a material place, and the people as material, corporeal beings, the same as in this world.

On this point the learned Dr. Priestly says: "It is expressly asserted by Aristotle and others, says Mr. Toland (Letters to Serena, p. 22), that the most ancient Greek philosophers did not dream of any principle or actuating spirit in the universe itself, no more than in any of the parts thereof; but explained all the phenomena of nature by matter and local motion, levity and gravity, or the like; and rejected all that the poets said of



gods, dæmons, souls, ghosts, Heaven, hell, visions, prophecies, and miracles, &c., as fables invented at pleasure, and fictions to divert their readers.”<sup>1</sup>

Says a learned author: “The Greeks sometimes depicted *death* and *sleep* as twin boys, one black, one white, borne slumbering in the arms of their mother, night.”<sup>2</sup> This was their idea of death—a deep sleep.

Herodotus says: “The Egyptians also were the first who asserted the doctrine that the soul of man is immortal.”<sup>3</sup> Other nations did not believe it till they learned it of the Egyptians, as I have shown in another chapter. This was not till a few centuries before Christ, about the time of Socrates and Plato, both of whom advocated that doctrine. They lived about B. C. 400. They confessed that their doctrine was not generally believed. Mr. Leland, in his admirable work on the Necessity of a Divine Revelation, says: “One of Socrates’ disciples, Cebes, tells him that the doctrine he taught concerning the immortality of the soul and a future state, ‘met with little credit among men;’ that ‘most men seemed to think that the soul was immediately dissolved at death, and that it vanished and was dissipated like the wind or smoke, or became nothing at all; and that it needed no small persuasion and faith to believe that the soul exists and has some power and intelligence after the man is dead.’ Socrates himself had said the same thing just before—that his doctrine was not believed by the generality.

Simmius, another of the dialogists in the Phædon, represents it as the opinion of *many*, that the soul is dissipated when a man dies, and that

<sup>1</sup>Disquisitions Relating to Matter and Spirit, Vol. I, pp. 318, 319.

<sup>2</sup>Alger, p. 18.

<sup>3</sup>Herod. Euterpe II, § 123.

this is the end of his existence. And Socrates, speaking of the soul's being blown away, and perishing with the body, declares that this *was what was said by most men*.

"From these testimonies it plainly appears," says Leland, "that the mortality of the soul was a doctrine which prevailed among the Athenians in the time of Socrates, who were looked upon as the most learned and polite of all the Grecians."<sup>1</sup> Plato complained that his arguments on the subject met with little credit. But did not Socrates and Plato succeed in converting all men to their new ideas of the soul? By no means. The above author continues: "There is no great reason to think that the state of things among the Athenians grew better afterward, *but rather the contrary*."<sup>2</sup>

We come down to the time of Polybius, who was born B. C. 203. "There is a remarkable passage of Polybius," says Leland, "which shows that the disbelief of a future state was in his time become very common and fashionable, both among persons of superior rank, and among the lower kind of people."<sup>3</sup> Far from being universally believed, as yet, then.

We next come to the time of Cicero, who was born B. C. 107. Perhaps this doctrine had gained greater credence by that time. Hear our learned author again: "What that great man Cicero says of the philosophers in his time, is remarkable. In that celebrated treatise, when he sets himself to prove the immortality of the soul, he represents the *contrary as the prevailing opinion*; that there were crowds of opponents, not the Epicureans only, but, which he could not well account for,

<sup>1</sup>Vol. II, pp. 382, 383.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 384.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 385.



those that were esteemed the most learned persons, had that doctrine in contempt.”<sup>1</sup> Mr. Watson, speaking of the same time, says: “Both philosophers and poets regarded them as vulgar fables. . . . Nor was the skepticism and unbelief of the wise and great long kept from the vulgar, among whom they wished to maintain the old superstitions as instruments by which they might be controlled. Cicero complains that the common people in his day mostly followed the doctrine of Epicurus.”<sup>2</sup> Epicurus denied the immortality of the soul. This testimony is worthy of consideration. The mass of the common people followed Epicurus, that is, disbelieved and denied entirely the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. And the poets and philosophers taught them this! Then who did believe it at that time? It was universally disbelieved. Cæsar represents the same thing as being true in his day.<sup>3</sup> So it was in the time of Plutarch, who was born about the middle of the first century. “He intimates that these things were not commonly believed.” Not only the philosophers, but the mass of the Roman people, had no faith in the doctrines of future rewards and punishments. Of the popular religion, Mr. Jones says: “The Romans in general knew the whole to be an imposition, and many of them ridiculed the pretense that the institution was divine.”<sup>4</sup> Again he says, “The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and of a future state of rewards and punishments, was but little understood, and, of course, only very partially acknowledged. Hence, at the period when Christ appeared, any notions of this kind found

<sup>1</sup>Ibid, p. 285.

<sup>2</sup>Thol. Inst., Vol. I, Chap. vi, p. 54.

<sup>3</sup>Leland's Rev., Vol. II, Part 3, Chap. viii, p. 387.

<sup>4</sup>Church Hist., p. 23.



little or no acceptance among the Greeks and Romans, but were regarded in the light of old wives' fables, fit only for the amusement of women and children."<sup>1</sup>

**THE PHILOSOPHERS.**—Nearly all the celebrated philosophers of Greece and Rome, and the schools founded by them, rejected the immortality of the soul. Aristotle, a Greek, born B. C. 384, stands first among them. He founded a flourishing school, called the Peripatetic, which had numerous followers, through many ages. That he rejected the idea of the soul's immortality is abundantly proved. The "Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge" says of him, "The soul of man he considered as an emanation from the Deity, but says nothing of its immortality."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Horne says: "Concerning the nature of the human soul, various, and most contradictory, sentiments prevailed; its existence after death was denied by many of the Peripatetics, or followers of Aristotle, and this seems to have been that philosopher's own opinion."<sup>3</sup> Buck says, "They were uncertain as to the immortality of the soul."<sup>4</sup> Tatian says, "But Aristotle impugns the immortality of the soul."<sup>5</sup> Watson says, "The doctrine of Aristotle and the Peripatetics gives no countenance to the opinion of the soul's immortality, or even of its existence after death."<sup>6</sup>

**EPICUREANS.**—Epicurus, a Greek, born B. C. 341, was the founder of this sect. "The Epicurean . . . sect continued to flourish through a long

<sup>1</sup>Ibid, p. 21.    <sup>2</sup>Art. Aristotle.    <sup>3</sup>Introduction, Vol. I, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup>Theol. Dict., Art. Aristotelians.

<sup>5</sup>Address to Greeks, Chap. xxv. See also Alger's Future Life, p. 191.

<sup>6</sup>Theol. Inst., Vol. I, p. 53. See also Divine Legation of Moses, Vol. II, Part 3, § 3, p. 167. Leland's Revelation, Vol. II, Part 3, Chap. iii, p. 284.

course of years under the Roman emperors."<sup>1</sup> Paul met them at Athens. Acts 17 : 18. To their doctrine he refers, 1 Cor. 15 : 32, when he says, "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink ; for to-morrow we die." They said that would be the end of man ; that death was an eternal sleep ; that there was no future life of any kind. These facts are so well known that I need offer little proof upon them. Buck says, "They denied the immortality of the soul, and the existence of angels."<sup>2</sup> Alger says, "Pliny, in his Natural History, affirms that death is an everlasting sleep. The whole great sect of the Epicureans united in supporting that belief by the combined force of ridicule and argument."<sup>3</sup> Of their numbers in the first century, Mosheim says, They were "everywhere so immensely great in the age to which we allude, that whole armies might have been formed of them."<sup>4</sup>

ACADEMICS.—This school originated with Socrates and Plato. In time it was divided into the Old, the Middle, and the New. We might naturally expect that they would teach the immortality of the soul ; but they did not. They held everything to be uncertain, and this with the rest. Says the learned Bishop of Gloucester, "The sect was thoroughly skeptical."<sup>5</sup> The Religious Encyclopedia bears this testimony: "Among the Academics, the existence of God, the immortality of the soul, the preferableness of virtue to vice, were all held as uncertain. This sect, and that of the Epicureans, were the chief that were in vogue in the time of

<sup>1</sup>Enfield's History of Phil., p. 369.

<sup>2</sup>Theol. Dict., Art. Epicureans.

<sup>3</sup>Future Life, p. 196.

<sup>4</sup>Commentaries, Vol. I, Chap. i, § 25, Note 2.

<sup>5</sup>Divine Lega. of Moses, Vol. II, p. 124.



Christ's appearing, and were embraced and supported by persons of high rank and wealth."<sup>1</sup> Then at that time the immortality of the soul must have been generally discarded.

THE PYRRHONIC SECT was founded by Pyrrho, about B. C. 340.<sup>2</sup> It doubted everything, and believed nothing. It was purely skeptical. Warburton remarks: "The Eleatic line (of philosophers) was wholly composed of atheists of different kinds, as the Democratic, the Pyrrhonian, the Epicurean, &c., so these come not into the account" as believers in the soul's immortality.<sup>3</sup>

THE STOICS, founded by Zeno, a Greek who died B. C. 264, was another very celebrated and numerous sect of philosophers. Enfield says that "the Stoic as well as the Academic school was patronized by many eminent men in the Roman Republic. The most distinguished lawyers were, as we have seen, inclined towards this sect."<sup>4</sup> Like those above mentioned, they rejected the soul's immortality. Mr. Jones says, "The Stoics denied the immortality of the soul."<sup>5</sup> Warburton remarks of Zeno, "We know, too, that the philosophical principle of his school was, *that the soul died with the body*."<sup>6</sup> Mosheim confirms this testimony thus: "It is well known to the learned world, that this (Stoic) sect denied the immortality of the soul."<sup>7</sup> So Alger asserts: "They all agreed that there was no real immortality for the soul."<sup>8</sup>

Thus we have seen that of the different sects of philosophers, the Aristotelians, the Epicureans, the Stoics, the Academics, and the Pyrrhonists, all

<sup>1</sup>Art. Academics.

<sup>2</sup>Enfield's Hist. of Phil., p. 282.

<sup>3</sup>Divine Lega., Vol. II, p. 119.

<sup>4</sup>Hist. of Phil., p. 304.

<sup>5</sup>Church Hist., p. 24.

<sup>6</sup>Divine Lega. of Moses, Vol. II, Book 3, § 3, p. 168.

<sup>7</sup>Commentary, Vol. I, p. 36.

<sup>8</sup>Future Life, p. 192.



denied the immortality of the soul; and the great mass of the people went with them on this. This leaves only the Platonics and Pythagoreans, who, it may be claimed, did believe the soul immortal. We know that they *talked* about the immortality of the soul, and *argued* about it, and professed to believe it; but it was only upon the doctrine of *emanation* and *immanation*, or *absorption*. That is, the soul is a part of God, an emanation from him, separated from him for a short time, but will finally, either at the death of the body or some future time, return to him, be re-absorbed into his being, and thus lose all personality and conscious existence. This, it will be seen, virtually amounts to annihilation of the soul. It is not at all like the present doctrine of the immortality of the soul. On this point, Bishop Warburton remarks:

“But when the ancients are said to hold the *pre* and *post* existence of the soul, and therefore to attribute a proper eternity to it, we must not suppose that they understood it to be eternal in its *distinct* and peculiar existence; but that it was discarped from the substance of God, *in time*, and would, *in time*, be *rejoined* and *resolved* into it again. This they explained by a closed vessel filled with sea-water, which, swimming awhile upon the ocean, does, on the vessel's breaking, flow in again, and mingle with the common mass. They only differed about the time of this reunion and resolution: THE GREATER PART HOLDING IT TO BE AT DEATH; but the Pythagoreans, not till after many transmigrations. The Platonists went between these two opinions, and rejoined pure and unpolluted souls immediately to the universal Spirit; but those which had contracted much defilement were sent into a succession of other bod-

ies, to purge and purify them, before they returned to their parent substance.”<sup>1</sup> Then he justly adds, “Thus we see that this very opinion of the soul’s *eternity*, which hath made modern writers conclude that the ancient sages believed a future state of rewards and punishments, was, in truth, the very reason why they believed it not.”<sup>2</sup> This was the doctrine of the Platonists and Pythagoreans. Speaking of this subject, Mr. Watson remarks, “Thus philosophy refined upon the doctrine of immortality until it converted it into *annihilation itself; for so it is in the most absolute sense as to distinct consciousness and personality*. The prevalence of this notion under different modifications is indeed very remarkable.”<sup>3</sup> He thus indorses Warburton’s position: “Some learned men have denied the consequence which Warburton wished to establish from these premises, and consider the re-absorption of these sages as figurative, and consequently compatible with distinct consciousness and individuality. The researches, however, since that time made into the corresponding philosophy of the Hindoos, bear this acute and learned man out to the full length of his conclusion.”<sup>4</sup>

What will our friends say to these facts? Not one of the ancients believed in the eternal personal existence of the soul. All souls were finally to lose their separate existence, and be re-absorbed into God. Certainly these will not be claimed as orthodox believers in the immortality of the soul! With these views they could not possibly believe in the eternal misery of the wicked.

There was another point universally held by

<sup>1</sup>Divine Lega. of Moses, Vol. II, Book 3, § 4, pp. 214, 215.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 216. <sup>3</sup>Theol. Inst., Vol. I, p. 50. <sup>4</sup>Ibid, pp. 50, 51.



the ancients which utterly forbade their believing in the immortality of the soul. They held to a periodical destruction of all things, the soul as well as the rest. Thus writes Mr. Leland: "It was a notion which generally obtained among them (the philosophers), that at certain periods which the Stoics termed conflagrations, and which were to happen at the end of what they, as well as the Pythagoreans and Platonists, called the great year, there should be an utter end put to the present state of things; and the souls of all men, and even of those of them which had become gods, demons, or heroes, were to be resumed into the universal soul, and thereby lose their individual existence."<sup>1</sup> Watson confirms this testimony thus: "Another notion equally extensive and equally destructive of the original doctrine of the immortality of the human soul, and a state of future rewards and punishments, which sprung up in the Egyptian schools, and was from thence transmitted into Greece, India, and throughout all Asia, was that of a periodical destruction and renovation of all things."<sup>2</sup> Then none among them could possibly believe in the immortality of the soul.

With the following testimonies from two eminent and learned men, I will dismiss these ancient heathens as fully convicted of not believing the immortality of the soul. After showing that Cicero was full of doubts on the subject, Dr. Horne says, "All which gave Seneca just occasion to say that 'Immortality, however desirable, was rather *promised* than *proved* by these great men.' While the followers of these great philosophers

<sup>1</sup>Leland's Revelation, Vol. II, Part 3, Chap. v, p. 341.

<sup>2</sup>Theol. Inst., Vol. I, Part 1, p. 52.



were thus perplexed with doubts, others of the heathen entertained the most gloomy notions,—imagining either that they should be removed from one body to another, and be perpetual wanderers, or contemplating the grave as their eternal habitation, and sadly complaining that the sun and stars could set again, but that man, when his day was set, must lie down in darkness, and sleep a perpetual sleep.”<sup>1</sup> No wonder that Paul said that the heathen had no hope, for it was really true. Gibbon, the celebrated historian, says, “The writings of Cicero represent in the most lively colors the ignorance, the errors, and the uncertainty, of the ancient philosophers with regard to the immortality of the soul. When they are desirous of arming their disciples against the fear of death, they inculcate, as an obvious though melancholy position, that the fatal stroke of our dissolution releases us from the calamities of life, and that those can no longer suffer, who no longer exist.”<sup>2</sup> So, then, the belief of the ancients was against the immortality of the soul.

The ancient Arabians did not believe the immortality of the soul. So says the very learned Dr. Good, though a believer in that doctrine. He writes thus: “If we turn from Persia, Egypt, and Hindoostan, to Arabia, . . . we shall find the entire subject left in as blank and barren a silence as the deserts by which they are surrounded; or, if touched upon, only touched upon to betray doubt, and sometimes disbelief. The tradition indeed of a future state of retributive justice seems to have reached the schools of this part of the world, and to have been generally,

<sup>1</sup>Horne's Introduction, Vol. I, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Decline and Fall, Vol. I, Chap. ii, p. 527.

though, perhaps, not universally, accredited; but the future existence it alludes to is that of a resurrection of the body; and not of a survival of the soul after the body's dissolution." "And the same general idea has, for the most part, descended in the same country to the present day."<sup>1</sup> Here, then, is another whole nation to be reckoned as non-believers in the soul's immortality.

The Jews also must be counted out as not believing the soul immortal. This I have proved in another chapter, which see.

MODERN NATIONS WHO DO NOT BELIEVE IT.—Not even to-day is the soul's immortality universally, nor even generally, believed, though it has been industriously propagated for over 2000 years, from the school of Plato to the modern theological seminaries. Nearly the whole of the Asiatic nations do not believe it, but hold to the total annihilation of all souls! That this is not merely my assertion will be seen by the following testimonies, all from men who hold to the immortality of the soul. Mr. Watson's testimony will not be questioned. Hear him: "With us, this (the soul's immortality) is a matter of general belief; *but not so with the generality of either ancient or modern pagans.* The same darkness which obscured the glory of God, proportionably diminished the glory of man—his true and proper immortality. The very ancient notion of an absorption of souls back again into the divine Essence was, with the ancients, what we know it to be now in the metaphysical system of the Hindoos, a denial of *individual* immortality; nor have the demonstrations of reason done anything to convince the other grand division of metaphysical

<sup>1</sup>Book of Nature, Series 3, § 2, p. 372.



pagans into which modern heathenism is divided, the followers of Budhu, WHO BELIEVE IN THE TOTAL ANNIHILATION OF BOTH MEN AND GODS AFTER A SERIES OF AGES,—A POINT OF FAITH HELD PROBABLY BY THE MAJORITY OF THE PRESENT RACE OF MANKIND.”<sup>1</sup>

This is a valuable testimony, specially from such an authority. This alone gives a majority at the present day against the soul’s immortality. Mr. Davy says: “The religion of Budhu is more widely extended than any other religion. It appears to be the religion of the whole of Tartary, of China, of Japan, and their dependencies, and of all the countries between China and the Bur-rampooter. . . They appear to be materialists in the strictest sense of the term, and to have no notion of pure spirit or mind. . . . Ordinary death is merely a change of form, and this change is almost infinite, and bounded only by annihilation, which they esteem the acme of happiness.”<sup>2</sup> Then a majority of the race are *materialists*, instead of immortal-soulists!

Our next witness is the candid author, Henry Howe. He writes: “Boodhism, the religion of Burmah, has the greatest number of disciples of any other on the globe, among whom is half of the people of China, Lao, Cochin China, and Ceylon; all of Cambodia, Siam, Burmah, Thibet, Tartary, and Loo-choo; and a great part of Japan, and most of the islands of the Southern seas.”<sup>3</sup> “Existence and sorrow are declared to be necessary concomitants; and therefore ‘the chief end of man’ is to finish this eternal round

<sup>1</sup>Theol. Inst., Vol. I, Part 1, Chap. iv, p. 22.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Travels of Celebrated Travelers, p. 596.  
Immortality.

of changes, and be annihilated. The great doctrines of this faith are five; viz., 1. The eternal existence of the universe and all things. 2. Metempsychosis. 3. Nicban, or annihilation," &c.<sup>1</sup>

Of this religion, Alger says: "It is the basis and motive of the most extensive disbelief of individual immortality the world has known."<sup>2</sup> Koeppen, in his work on the "Religion of Buddha," says, "BUDDHISM IS THE GOSPEL OF ANNIHILATION."<sup>3</sup> This evidence could be multiplied indefinitely, but the above settles the point that they are not, and never were, believers in the immortality of the soul.

A few words with regard to the great nation of the Chinese. They do not believe the doctrine of the soul's immortality. They are materialists in the broadest sense. Confucius was their great teacher and lawgiver. For thousands of years his doctrines have been implicitly received by at least *one-fourth* of the race!<sup>4</sup> He taught nothing about a future state.<sup>5</sup> He did not claim to know anything beyond this life.<sup>6</sup> Says Horne, "Religion as a system of divine worship, as piety toward God, and as holding forth future rewards and punishments, can hardly be said to exist among the Chinese."<sup>7</sup> Dr. Morrison says that the learned sect among the Chinese are "entirely silent respecting the immortality of the soul."<sup>8</sup> Says John Leland, "It is observed by the celebrated Mons. de Montesquien, 'that the religion of Confucius denies the immortality of the soul;'"<sup>9</sup> and

<sup>1</sup>Ibid, pp. 597, 598.    <sup>2</sup>Future Life, Part 5, Chap. viii, p. 615.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, Part 2, Chap. vi, pp. 111-127.

<sup>4</sup>New Am. Cyclo., Art. Confucius.

<sup>5</sup>Howe's Travels of Celebrated Travelers, p. 200.

<sup>6</sup>Ency. Brit., Art. Confucius.    <sup>7</sup>Introduction, Chap. i, p. 21.

<sup>8</sup>Quoted by Prof. Hudson in Future Life, Chap. viii, p. 266.

<sup>9</sup>Leland's Rev., Vol. II, Part 3, Chap. iii, p. 297.



he indorses the statement. He cites several eminent men who had spent a long time in China, and who declare that the Chinese have no idea of the immortality of the soul.<sup>1</sup> He says that "Confucius being asked by one of his disciples what angels or spirits are, answered that they are *air*. *And this is the notion that the Chinese have of the soul. They look upon it to be a material thing, though highly rarified; and that when the soul is separated from the body, both of them lose the individual being they had before, and nothing remains but the substance of heaven and earth which had before concurred to the composition of man.*"<sup>2</sup> This must suffice for the Chinese. These, with the Hindoos, &c., already named, who do not believe in the immortality of the soul, as I have shown, give a majority of the world against the soul's immortality.

The Mahometans, who arose in the seventh century, and now number 160,000,000, are divided on the subject of the condition of the soul between death and the resurrection. On this they have argued and speculated much, but are still divided on it. "Souls of the prophets, it is thought, are admitted directly to Heaven. The souls of martyrs, according to a tradition received from Mahomet, rest in Heaven in the crops of green birds who eat of the fruits and drink of the rivers there. As to the location of the souls of the common crowd of the faithful, the conclusions are various. Some maintain that they and the souls of the impious alike sleep in the dust until the end, when Israfil's blast will stir them into life to be judged. But the general and orthodox impression is that they tarry in one of the heav-

<sup>1</sup>See Ibid, pp. 297, 300. <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 300.

ens, enjoying a preparatory blessedness.”<sup>1</sup> So says Mr. Alger.

THE EXQUIMAUX can have no idea of the immortality of the soul, as they have none of God, or of any religion. Says the “Universal Traveler”: “The Exquimaux appear to have no idea of the existence of one Supreme Being, nor can they be said to entertain any notions on this subject, which may be dignified with the name of religion.”<sup>2</sup> So they cannot be counted as orthodox believers in the immortality of the soul.

THE GREENLANDERS are in about the same condition. Says the same author, “It is very singular that the heathens inhabiting this country *have no worship*.” Some have thought that they worship the sun. “*But*, says he, “*they have no religion at all*, although they are not without some notion of a divine Being, and of a future state.”<sup>3</sup> They, too, must be thrown out of the count, as there is no proof of their faith in the soul’s immortality.

THE FEEJEES do not believe it, for they believe in the annihilation of the wicked. A recent author writes of them, “Departing souls go to the tribunal of Ndengei, who either receives them into bliss, or sends them back, as ghosts, to haunt the scenes of their former existence, or distributes them as food to devils, or imprisons them for a period, and then dooms them to *annihilation*.”<sup>4</sup> This is far from any idea of an immortal, immaterial soul.

THE SANDWICH ISLANDERS must be counted as non-believers also. “The people of the Sandwich Islands held a confused medley of notions as to

<sup>1</sup>Future Life, p. 201.

<sup>2</sup>p. 77.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid, p. 82.

<sup>4</sup>Alger’s Doctrine of a Future Life, p. 70.



another life. In different persons among them there were found, in regard to this subject, superstitious terror, blank indifference, positive unbelief. Some thought spirits were *destroyed* in this realm of darkness; others that they *were eaten by a stronger race of spirits there*; others still, that they survived there, subsisting upon lizzards and butterflies."<sup>1</sup> Is this the immortality of the soul?

THE NEW ZEALANDERS believe that the common people are not immortal. Says Alger: They "said the souls of the Stuas, the nobles, were immortal, but the Cookees perished entirely."<sup>2</sup>

D. H. Kolf, in his "Voyages," says of a tribe of Africans, "Of the immortality of the soul they have not the least conception."<sup>3</sup>

THE INDIANS.—I know that it is often asserted that the different Indian tribes of America all believe the soul immortal; but I have looked in vain for the proof. They have some vague ideas of a future life; but they are all very gross and material indeed. They expect to be there much as they are here,—to take their dog, and knife, and arrows, &c., with them, and use them there the same as here. This is far from indicating a belief in an immortal, immaterial soul. To say the least, it is exceedingly doubtful about their faith in this matter. The least hint that they have any idea of a hereafter is taken as proof positive that they believe the soul immortal! We demand proof before we admit the claim.

CHRISTIANS.—There is to-day a large and increasing body of Christians who do not believe in the immortality of the soul. They are commonly

<sup>1</sup>Ibid.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 210.

<sup>3</sup>Immortality of the Soul, by Cooper, p. 34.

called, DESTRUCTIONISTS. They believe the Bible implicitly, and believe in future rewards and punishments, and the eternal life of the saints; but they do not believe in the natural immortality of man, nor in the conscious state of the dead between death and the resurrection. According to the best calculation we can make, they now number about 75,000 or 100,000 believers.

Another class must be counted out in this calculation. I have traveled extensively and preached the doctrine of the mortality of man. Wherever we go, we find many persons who say that they were never satisfied about the immortality of the soul, never could really believe it. We find these persons both in the church and out. Yet they are commonly counted as believers in that doctrine. I am satisfied that there are thousands of this class. Again, there are many thousands of infidels, deists, and atheists, who do not believe the soul immortal. These, also, must be counted out. Remember that it is *numbers*, and not *character*, that is the question. *Universal* belief in this dogma, of all people in all ages, is claimed. This we deny, and offer figures to prove it.

SUMMARY.—Thus we have briefly shown that the immortality of the soul was first taught by the Egyptians; that there is no trace of it in the early history of ancient nations; that it was denied by *most men* in the time of Socrates; that the generality did not believe it in the time of Polybius; that the contrary of the soul's immortality was the prevailing opinion in the time of Cicero; that this disbelief was full as extensive in the first century; that nearly all the great schools of philosophy openly denied it; that even those who professed to believe it held it only on



the principle of emanation and re-absorption, which virtually annihilates all individuality; that none of the ancients could possibly believe it, as they all held to a great periodical destruction of all things; that the Arabians were ignorant of the doctrine; that the Jews did not believe it; that the Hindoos and Boodhists, comprising fully three-fourths of the human race, implicitly hold to the annihilation of all men; that the Chinese do not believe it; that many of the Mahometans believe in the sleep of the dead; that the Ex-quimaux, Greenlanders, Feejees, New Zealanders, and Sandwich Islanders, have no such doctrine among them; that it is not proved that the native Indians believe it; that there are many Christians who deny it; and that, finally, there are thousands of others who have no faith in it. These facts show that but a small portion of the race have ever believed in the immortality of the soul.

But, it will be said, all the Catholics, Greek Church, &c., do believe it. Yes; and they universally believe other monstrous errors too. The fact is, the devotees of these churches implicitly believe whatever their priests teach them, reasonable or unreasonable. Hence their faith should have but little weight on this question. From the present 1,300,000,000 inhabitants of the world, take out those who do really believe the soul immortal, and it will leave a vast majority who do not believe it.

ETERNAL MISERY.—A few thoughts about this. Will any one claim that this doctrine has been universally believed? I think not; for it would be vain to make such a claim. Bishop Warburton, Mr. Leland, Mr. Watson, Dr. Horne, and other eminent men have abundantly proved that

none of the heathen world could possibly hold such a doctrine in accordance with their known leading principles. For instance, the innumerable hosts of the Boodhists believe that all souls will finally be re-absorbed into Deity. Hence it is impossible that they should believe in the eternal misery of any soul. This doctrine has always been, and is to-day, believed by the majority of mankind. To these must be added all those other classes who, I have shown above, do not believe the immortality of the soul. To these we must add all the hosts of infidels, atheists, free-thinkers, skeptics, and deists, who of course do not believe it. Then we must add all the Unitarians, and Universalists, and Restorationists, who utterly deny it. Then you must count in one hundred thousand Destructionists, who disbelieve it. Then we must make allowance for a large class in all the churches, and a still larger number of outsiders, as they are called, who simply assent to this doctrine, but who, when questioned upon this point, confess that they never did, nor could, believe the doctrine of eternal torment. Take out all these classes, and how many real believers in eternal misery does it leave? Not one in ten of the human race.



## CHAPTER II.

## ORIGIN OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

THAT such a doctrine is now largely believed, is well known. That it is not taught in the Bible, has been fully shown many times; hence it did not originate there. Then where did it originate? All evidence, both ancient and modern, points to Egypt as the mother of this doctrine. Here are a few testimonies. The first is from Herodotus, than whom there could be no higher authority on this question. He was a Greek, born B. C. 484, and is regarded as the father of profane history.<sup>1</sup> He traveled into Egypt, and many countries, and carefully studied the customs and doctrines of those ancient nations; hence he was well qualified to speak the truth on these points. He says: "*The Egyptians were also the first who asserted the doctrine that the soul of man is immortal, and that when the body perishes, it enters into some other animal, constantly springing into existence; and when it has passed through the different kinds of terrestrial, marine, and aerial beings, it again enters into the body of a man that is born, and that this revolution is made in 3000 years.*"<sup>2</sup>

Bunsen, in his learned and elaborate work on Egypt, says: "The Egyptians were the first who taught the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, a fact mentioned by all Greek writers from Herodotus to Aristotle, and one brilliantly confirmed by the monuments."<sup>3</sup> This declaration from such

<sup>1</sup>Anthon's Class. Dict., Art. Herodotus.

<sup>2</sup>Herod. Euterpe II, § 123.

<sup>3</sup>Egypt's Place in Universal Hist., Vol. IV, p. 639.

high authority should be well considered by all lovers of truth. Bishop Warburton confirms these testimonies, thus: "The Egyptians, as we are assured by the concurrent testimony of antiquity, were amongst the first who taught that the soul survived the body and was immortal."<sup>1</sup> Egypt, then, and not the Bible, is the mother of this doctrine. So says the voice of all antiquity. Balfour bears this testimony: "Mr. Stanley says the Egyptians were the first who asserted that the soul of man was immortal, and cites in proof Eusebius, Diodorus Siculus, and Halicarnassus."<sup>2</sup>

That most, if not all, the ancient heathen nations borrowed their systems of religion, especially that relating to the soul, from Egypt, is abundantly proved. Enfield, in his well-known History of Philosophy, says: "Egypt is unquestionably to be ranked amongst the most ancient civilized countries, and was very early famous for wisdom. Many eminent philosophers among the Greeks, such as Orpheus, Thales, Pythagoras, Democritus, and Plato, visited Egypt in search of knowledge."<sup>3</sup> St. Hippolytus says that the Egyptians "were the first to proclaim to all the rest of men the rites and orgies of, at the same time, all the gods."<sup>4</sup> Bishop Warburton, who has studied and written so largely upon this subject, says of the heathen mysteries, that they "all have their common original from Egypt." Again: "It is very certain, they came first from Egypt."<sup>5</sup> He declares, and truly too, that "the Magi of Persia, the Druids of Gaul, and the Brahmins of India," were all "the genuine offspring of the Egyptian

<sup>1</sup>Divine Lega. of Moses Dem., Vol. II, p. 239.

<sup>2</sup>Essays on the Intermediate State, p. 73.

<sup>3</sup>p. 36.

<sup>4</sup>Anteniccence Christian Library, Vol. VI, p. 134.

<sup>5</sup>Div. Lega. of Moses Dem., Vol. I, pp. 194, 233.



priests.”<sup>1</sup> Of the terrors of the infernal regions, Dr. Good says, “Egypt is generally said to have been the inventress of this important and valuable part of the common tradition.”<sup>2</sup> Rollin, the historian, says: “It is to Egypt that Pythagoras owed his favorite doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls.”<sup>3</sup> Mr. Watson also says, that it was from Egypt that the other nations borrowed many of their religious doctrines.<sup>4</sup>

These testimonies might be multiplied indefinitely, but I consider the above sufficient to establish the fact that Egypt was the mother of the religious systems of Greece, Rome, India, &c., but especially was she the mother of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

#### THE FIRST FORM IN WHICH THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL WAS TAUGHT.

Generally no error is born into the world fully grown and perfectly developed at once; but it has a gradual growth, and passes through different stages of development, till it becomes a regular system. Some truth, either natural or revealed, is always taken as the foundation on which to build up a system of error. The counterfeit must at first be very nearly like the genuine, or it would not be received, as all would detect the fraud. So we may expect to find this true of the doctrine under consideration. It is a doctrine relating to future life. So let us look a moment at the doctrine of a future life as revealed in the word of God. The Lord told man in the beginning, that,

<sup>1</sup>Ibid, Vol. II, p. 106.

<sup>2</sup>Book of Nature, p. 378.

<sup>3</sup>Anct. Hist., Vol. I, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Theol. Inst., Vol. I, pp. 43, 52.

if he sinned, he should surely die. Gen. 2:17. When man had sinned, God said to him, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." Gen. 3:19. Christ came into the world, died, went into the grave, and rose again, that man also might have a resurrection from the dead. Rom. 14:9; 1 Cor. 15. A future life could only be had by a resurrection from the dead. For this resurrection all the ancient worthies, from Abel to Paul, looked with earnest anticipation. Heb. 11:4-13, 32-40; Phil. 3:10, 11. This resurrection, the angel in the bush taught Moses. Luke 20:37. Job, and David, and, in short, all the ancient people of God, rested all their hopes upon it. Job 19:25-27; Ps. 17:15. This was the first and true doctrine of a future life as revealed by God to man.

Now it becomes an interesting inquiry to ascertain what was the first form in which the immortality of the soul was taught. Did it have any semblance to the resurrection of the dead? I think the facts will show that it did. It is a well-known fact that the ancient Egyptians were celebrated for embalming the dead. This they did at a great expense, and so effectually that many bodies are preserved in quite a perfect condition to the present day. They are called *mummies*. What was their object in thus preserving their dead? After looking at the question carefully, and obtaining all the evidence I am able, I am fully satisfied that it was done with reference to *the resurrection of the body*. That I have not drawn this conclusion without evidence, will be seen by the following testimonies, which are from the very best authorities on such a question. The first is from "Calmet's Great Dictionary of the



Holy Bible.” He says: “The ancient Egyptians, and the Hebrews in imitation of them, embalmed the bodies of the dead. . . . The art of physic was by the Egyptians ascribed to Isis, and in particular the remedy which procured *immortality*, which, in my opinion, was no other than that of embalming bodies, and rendering them incorruptible.”<sup>1</sup> This language is remarkable. Their first idea of immortality was to preserve the body from decay till it should live again, and thus become immortal. “That the custom of embalming was very ancient in Egypt, is shown from the practice of cutting the bodies with an Ethiopian stone. Some mummies also bear the date of the oldest kings.”<sup>2</sup> The next witness on this point shall be from that celebrated work, “Kitto’s Biblical Cyclopedia.” He says: “The feeling which led the Egyptians to embalm the dead, probably sprung from their belief *in the future reunion of the soul with the body*. Such a reunion is distinctly spoken of in the ‘Book of the Dead;’ and obscure as is the subject, probably on account of the obscurity of the details of the Egyptian belief, the statements are sufficiently positive to make this general conclusion certain.”<sup>3</sup>

Thus we see that this critical author states that it is *certain* that embalming was practiced to preserve the body from decay till the reunion of the soul with it, or till it should live again. What more natural than this? and what could have been the object of embalming the dead bodies, if this were not it? Mr. Chambers says: “This art [embalming] seems to have derived its origin from the idea that the preservation of the body

<sup>1</sup>Art. To Embalm.

<sup>2</sup>Egypt and the Books of Moses, p. 71.

<sup>3</sup>Art. Embalming.

was necessary for the return of the soul to the human form, after it had completed its cycle of the existence of three or ten thousand years.”<sup>1</sup>

I shall now introduce another witness, Mr. Bunsen, whose testimony on this subject should be decisive. No author could be better prepared to judge, than he. “The real meaning,” says he, “of the celebrated passage in Herodotus (ii, 135) about the reasons why the Egyptians bestowed so much care on the preservation of the body, and, as it were, on preventing it from passing away, must have been this: *The belief in a resurrection of the body*, so far, at least, that the aim of the soul was a new personal life as man, perhaps after having been doomed to undergo transmigration through animal bodies for 3000 years; the same period as was assumed by Plato for the wandering of the soul, and termed by him the Cycle of Necessity, according to Pythagoric usage. The soul, on the death of the body, might pass into some animal form or other, which came into existence at the very moment, before it returned again, into the human body, in a higher or lower state. Man justified is one with God, the eternal Creator, self-created. His bodily organ, therefore, is holy. This doctrine we may now read in *every page of the sacred books*. Thence the popular notion in Egypt, that unless its old human envelope was preserved, the soul would be subject to disturbances and hindrances in performing its destined course. . . . The Greeks and Romans had an equal faith in burial as necessary to insure the entry of the soul into the invisible world of spirits.” Again: “It is only by considering how very deeply this sense of immortality was en-

<sup>1</sup>Chamber's Cyclopedia, Art. Embalming.



grafted on the Egyptian mind, that we can comprehend the passion for the monstrous and colossal proportions of the pyramids, and, at the same time, the glorious, emblematical, and artistic character of those works of the Old Empire. As animal worship is merely the Egyptianized African form of an early Asiatic conception, so is also the combination of the care for the preservation of the body, and, if possible, its protection from destruction, *connected with the doctrine of immortality. The soul was immortal; but its happiness, if not the possibility of its continuing to live, depended on the preservation of the body. The destruction of the body, consequently, involved the destruction of the soul.* We assuredly owe the stupendous fabric of the pyramids to a superstitious fear of the destruction of the body, rather than to the mere vanity or love of display on the part of the builders. . . . This inability, combined with the artistic impulses of the Egyptians, led to the colossal preservatories which arose out of a superstitious adherence to the notion of the value of the body, and which clung with a rigid gripe to the materialistic principle."<sup>1</sup>

There are several facts stated in the above, worthy of attention:

1. "The belief in a resurrection of the body" was what led the Egyptians to embalm the dead.
2. They believed that the soul would return to the body, and thus begin a new life as man. This shows that they connected the idea of a future life inseparably with the life of the body.
3. It was "a popular notion in Egypt, that unless the old human envelope was preserved" the

<sup>1</sup>Egypt's Place in Universal Hist., Vol. IV, pp. 641, 642, 651, 652.

soul would not be happy. Here, again, the soul depends upon the body.

4. The preservation of the body from destruction was connected with the doctrine of immortality—no immortality without a preservation and re-living of the body. “*The soul was immortal; but its happiness, if not the possibility of its continuing to live, depended on the preservation of the body. The destruction of the body, consequently, involved the destruction of the soul.*” The soul was immortal only as connected with an immortal body! This is so near the scriptural idea of immortality that we may easily recognize its origin. We have reason to thank God that in those early ages we can find so clear an idea still retained of the divine doctrine of a future life only by a resurrection of the body.

5. This writer thinks that the pyramids looked to the same object—a preservation of the dead.

6. The old Egyptians in those early times were materialists.

Mr. Mitchell, in his “Ancient Geography,” confirms the above testimonies. He uses this language: “The priests adopted the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul, while the belief that it will continue as long as the body endures, obtained with the people; whence the care displayed in the preservation of embalmed bodies, or mummies, and the vast expense of excavating tombs in the solid rocks.”<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, we have the object of embalming, the object of the pyramids, and the first idea of the immortality of the soul as taught by the Egyptians,—quite different from the present doctrine of the soul’s immortality! To corroborate

<sup>1</sup>Lesson 24, p. 60, Art. Egypt.



these facts, a few more testimonies will be offered. Says Mr. Gibbon: "The doctrine of the resurrection was first entertained by the Egyptians, and their mummies were embalmed, their pyramids were constructed, to preserve the ancient mansion of the soul, during a period of three thousand years."<sup>1</sup> Gibbon agrees well with Bunsen.

The "Union Bible Dictionary," on embalming, says: "Others tell us it was to preserve the body for the dwelling-place of the soul, after it had completed its various transmigrations."<sup>2</sup>

An article to the same effect is found in the "Bibliotheca Sacra," by J. Richards, D. D. Showing how extensively the doctrine of the resurrection has been believed among all nations, he remarks: "The study of the Egyptians in the art of embalming, and in the time-defying character of their sepulchers, evinces an anxiety for the body, which we think it will be difficult to explain short of the hypothesis of a resurrection." Again: "A deeper conviction of the same comes from the mummies of Egypt, whose date reaches back three thousand, and, perhaps, four thousand, years ago, and especially when we connect them with their complicated infoldings, their sarcophagi, and the colossal structures of catacombs and pyramids, built for their reception. Desire to perpetuate a name might be a sufficient motive among the great ones of the earth, the Pharaohs and their prime ministers; but we can hardly think so of the multitude. Again; respect and affection for friends, we should think, would be satisfied with obsequies which did not forecast for thou-

<sup>1</sup>Decline and Fall, Vol. V, p. 117.  
Immortality.

<sup>2</sup>Art. Embalm.

sands of years. But here we see a *whole nation*, from the prince to the peasant, preserving with most careful solicitude the mortal part, and successfully, too, as if in expectation of its living again. From the whole history of funeral rites that come to us from every source, we cannot avoid the conviction that the doctrine of a resurrection was entertained in the earliest ages, and has permeated the religious notions of every tribe."<sup>1</sup>

Embalming, then, was to preserve the body for a reliving—a resurrection. This was their first conception of immortality. How well this ancient notion corresponds with the Bible doctrine of a future life! But we shall soon see this greatly changed and perverted.

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### CHAPTER III.

#### HOW THE SEPARATE EXISTENCE OF THE SOUL CAME TO BE BELIEVED.

IF the reader supposes that the first ideas which the ancients had of the soul were the same as those popular among us now, he needs to be undeceived. The idea that the soul, after the body dies, is an immortal, immaterial, conscious, and active personality, which goes immediately to Heaven or hell, was not arrived at immediately, but is the result of the fancy, the imagination, the poetry, the philosophy, and the laws, of many

<sup>1</sup>Vol. VI, Art. Cemeteries.



ages. It is interesting to trace its gradual development. The first idea that the ancients conceived of the soul or spirit as existing separate from the body after death, was that of a *shadow*, or *shade*, resembling the body in shape, but larger in size. This *shade* was fancied to be a very thin, misty, aerial, material substance. At first the shades of all, both good and bad, were said to be gathered together under ground in *hades*, *tartarus*, or *sheol*. They were not permitted to visit the upper world among the living. They were said to be in a dreamy, partially-sleeping condition. Gradually they were, by poetic imagination, invested with more life and intelligence, and were assigned employments in *hades* like those they led on earth. Next, a few were said to come up from their dreary abode, and appear to the living. They represented *hades* to be a damp, chilly, dismal place. They sighed to return to earth.

Gradually the scene changed with them to still more activity, light, power, and intelligence, till a few privileged ones were raised to dwell on the surface of the earth, then higher in the air, and at last to Heaven. Here they were invested with mighty power as demons, demi-gods, and gods, to rule over the living. Finally, all the good were granted this privilege of going to Heaven. So it was with regard to the punishment of the wicked in *hades*. At first, only a very few were punished there; then, certain crimes in all; at length, all the wicked were punished there at death. But this change in the minds of the people was very slow, and reached over a period of many ages. Many testimonies could be presented on these points; but I can only offer a few here. The origin of many of these ideas is thus stated by Alger:

“The origin of many notions touching a future state, found in literature, is to be traced to those rambling thoughts and poetic reveries with which even the most philosophical minds, in certain moods, indulged themselves.” “Two general sources have now been described of the barbarian conception in relation to a future state. First, the natural operation of an earnest recollection of the dead; sympathy, regret, and reverence for them, leading the thoughts and heart to grope after them, to brood over the possibilities of their fate, and to express themselves in rites and emblems. Secondly, the mythological or arbitrary creations of the imagination when it is set strongly to work, as it must be by the solemn phenomena associated with death. But beyond these two comprehensive statements, there is, directly related to the matter, and worthy of separate illustration, a curious action of the mind, which has been extensively experienced, and fertile of results. It is the peculiar example of the unconscious impartation of objective existence to mental ideas. With the death of the body, the man does not cease to live in the remembrance, the imagination, and the heart, of his surviving friends. By an unphilosophical confusion, this internal image is credited as an external existence. The dead pass from their customary haunts in our society to the imperishable domain of ideas. Fancy and reason thus set at work, speedily construct a thousand theories filled with details. Desire fathers thought, and then thought woos belief.”<sup>1</sup>

This was the real origin of the notion that the soul lives after the body dies—imagination and desire. Dr. Knapp, in accounting for this doc-

<sup>1</sup>Future Life, Part 2, Chap. i, p. 81; and Part 1, Chap. iii, p. 38.



trine among the ancients, says: "They often had dreams, in which the dead appeared to them speaking and acting; and in this way they found their wishes, and the traditions they had received from their fathers, confirmed anew."<sup>1</sup> Even now, wishes, dreams, death-bed scenes, etc., are the best proof which many have for the immortality of the soul.

With regard to the first conception of the abode and condition of departed spirits, Dr. Knapp remarks: "Far more general was the opinion among the ancient nations that the abode of departed spirits is under the earth; because the dead are laid beneath the ground, and their bodies return to the dust. The souls there separated from their bodies were regarded as a sort of aerial beings, or shades. Taken as a whole, the ancient Eastern nations and the Greeks agreed in this point."<sup>2</sup>

The following gives a good general idea of ancient thoughts with regard to the state of the dead. It will be noticed that they all regarded the soul material. "The disembodied soul, as conceived by the Greeks, and after them by the Romans, is material, but of so thin a contexture that it cannot be felt with the hands. It is exhaled with the dying breath, or issues through a warrior's wounds. The sword passes through its uninjured form as through air. It is to the body what a dream is to waking action. Retaining the shape, lineaments, and motion, the man had in life, it is immediately recognized upon appearing. It quits the body with much reluctance, leaving that warm and vigorous investiture for a chill and forceless existence. It glides along without noise,

<sup>1</sup>Christian Theology, p. 519.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid. p. 524.

and very swiftly, like a shadow. It is unable to enter the lower kingdom and be at peace until its deserted body has been buried with sacred rites; meanwhile, naked and sad, it flits restlessly about the gates, uttering doleful moans."<sup>1</sup> Thus the happiness of the soul was intimately connected with that of the body. With regard to the gradual development of their ideas of hell, ghosts, etc., he says: "First, then, from a study of the Greek mythology, we find all the dead a dull populace of ghosts—fluttering through the neutral melancholy of hades without discrimination. And finally we discern, in the world of the dead, a sad middle region, with a paradise on the right hand, and a hell on the left, the whole presided over by three incorruptible judges, who appoint the new comers their places in accordance with their deserts."<sup>2</sup>

A gradual but constant change in the ideas of all the ancient nations with regard to the condition of souls in hades and tartarus, is clearly discernible. Dr. Geo. Christian Knapp, D. D., in his lectures on Christian Theology, now so extensively read, says: "Both the Hebrews and Greeks describe this *under world* as a great kingdom, and both use the phrase, *gates of death*, or hades. Cf. Homer. Here, according to the ideas of men in the *earliest ages*, the shades of the good and bad dwell together, without any distinction or any marked separation. Thus it is where sheol is introduced in the Old Testament—*e. g.*, Isa. 14, where there is a kind of distinction of rank, and kings sit upon thrones; but where nothing definite and clear is said respecting a distinction in the places of the pious and the wicked. Thus in

<sup>1</sup>Doctrines of a Future Life, pp. 175, 176.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, p. 179.



Homer, too, even those who are punished are in the same place with the other shades."<sup>1</sup>

"But, after a time, these places in the lower world were divided, and the residences of the righteous and the wicked were conceived of as separate."<sup>2</sup> One important fact cannot fail to be observed, viz.: Instead of the ancients' having among them, on the start, a clear and well-defined doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the conscious state of the dead, these ideas have gradually grown up among them, not from an early and clear tradition, but from the causes already given, and others to be named. This is an important fact in our inquiry, and should be well weighed.

Other causes which greatly aided the development of early conceptions concerning the state of the dead, were poets and poetry. These have always had a great influence in shaping the ideas and traditions of rude nations. No subject ever furnished a better theme for poetic fiction and imagination than that of the state and condition of men after death; and in none has greater liberty of fancy been taken than in this. Whoever wishes proof of this, may look into the pages of Homer, Virgil, Dante, etc. These poets have given loose reins to their warm imaginations, to revel in the most horrid scenes. These productions have been eagerly listened to by the people, and the effect has been marked and lasting. These poets were the ones who first taught the ancient heathen their religious tenets. Thus writes Herodotus: "For I am of opinion that Hesoid and Homer [poets] lived four hundred years before my time, and not more, and these were they who framed the theogony for the Greeks, and gave

<sup>1</sup>Odys., xi, 575, seq.

<sup>2</sup>Sec. 150, pp. 524-526.

names to the gods, and assigned to them honors and arts, and declared their several forms.”<sup>1</sup>

Another cause, and, perhaps, the chief one, which aided in developing and supporting a belief in this doctrine, *was the interest and authority of priests and lawgivers*. Commonly these two offices were united in one person. Of course, the more importance the priests could attach to the soul, and to rewards and punishments after death, the greater influence would they have with the people, and the more readily would they support them. Hence their interest was to build up this doctrine at every opportunity; and history shows that, from the Egyptians to the Roman Catholic priests, they have not been slack in doing this. So, also, the magistrate found that it greatly aided him in controlling the people, and in keeping them under, by threatening them with the wrath of the gods, and future torments, for disobedience to his laws. “Hence, also,” says Dr. Horne, “the most celebrated legislators of antiquity, as Zoroaster, Minos, Pythagoras, Solon, Lycurgus, Numa, etc., etc., all thought it necessary to profess some intercourse with Heaven, in order to give the greater sanction to their laws and institutions, notwithstanding many of them were armed with secular power.”<sup>2</sup> Hence he also united his interest with the priest in helping forward this doctrine. Volumes might be, and have been, written, showing that this was the case. The very learned Bishop Warburton, in his “Divine Legation of Moses Demonstrated in Nine Books,” has abundantly proved, by copious quotations from ancient writers, that what was said about the *infernal regions*, elysium, etc., was all invented by the priests and lawgivers to frighten

<sup>1</sup>Herod. Euterp. II, 53, p. 116.

<sup>2</sup>Intro., Vol. I, p. 16.



the people, and keep them in subjection. To him and others the reader is referred, while I shall content myself with offering only a few short testimonies. That great historian and geographer, Strabo, thus gives the reason why hell torments were invented by the lawgivers. He also shows the influence poets have had in the matter. He writes thus: "So numbers of our citizens are incited to deeds of virtue by the beauties of fable, when they hear the poets in a strain of enthusiasm recording noble actions, such as the labors of Hercules or Theseus, and the honors bestowed on them by the gods, or even when they see paintings, sculptures, or figures, bearing their romantic evidence to such events. In the same way they are restrained from vicious courses, when they think they have received from the gods, by oracles or some other invisible intimations, threats, menaces, or chastisements, or even if they only believe they have befallen others. The great mass of women and common people cannot be induced, by mere force of reason, to devote themselves to piety, virtue, and honesty; superstition must therefore be employed, and even this is insufficient without the aid of the marvelous and the terrible. For what are the thunderbolts, the ægis, the trident, the torches, the dragons, the barbed thyrses, the arms of the gods, and all the paraphernalia of antique theology, but *fables employed by the founders of States, as bugbears to frighten timorous minds. Such was mythology.*"<sup>1</sup>

Yes, indeed, such it was—a mass of frightful fables and bugbears to scare the people into submission. Of the ancient Brahmins, this writer says: "They invent fables also after the manner

<sup>1</sup>Strabo, Book 1, Chap. ii, §8, p. 30.

of Plato, on the immortality of the soul, and on the punishment in hades, and other things of this kind."<sup>1</sup> What Plato and others said about the immortality of the soul, punishments in hades, etc., were understood to be only fables. Another eminent Greek historian, Polybius, B. C. 203, bears a similar testimony, thus: "Since the multitude is ever fickle, full of lawless desires, irrational passions, and violence, there is no way to keep them in order, but by fear and terror of the invisible world; on which account our ancestors seem to me to have acted judiciously, when they contrived to bring into the popular belief these notions of the gods, and of the infernal regions."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Horne bears this testimony: "For, though the poets have prettily fancied, and have portrayed in beautiful and glowing verse, the joys of elysium, or a<sup>pp</sup> place and state of bliss, and the miseries of tartarus, or hell; and though the ancient philosophers and legislators were sensible of the importance to society, and also of the necessity, of the doctrine of future punishments, yet they generally discarded them as vain and superstitious terrors."<sup>3</sup> Watson says the same. Says Warburton, "They enforced the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments, by every sort of contrivance." Alger truthfully observes: "The doctrine of the soul's survival and transference to another world, where its experience depends on conditions observed or violated here, conditions somewhat in the control of a select class of men here—such a doctrine is the very hiding-place of the power of priestcraft, a vast engine of interest and sway which the shrewd insight of priesthoods

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., Vol. III, Book 15, Chap. i, §59.

<sup>2</sup>Intro., Vol. I, p. 19.

<sup>3</sup>Book 6, 56.



has often devised, and the cunning policy of States, subsidized." The above author thus sums up the causes which operated to establish the heathen nations in these doctrines: "Finally," says he, "by the combined power, first, of natural conscience affirming a future distinction between the good and the bad; secondly, of imperfect conceptions of God as a passionate avenger; thirdly, of the licentious fancies of poets, drawing awful imaginative pictures of future woe; fourthly, of the cruel spirit, and the ambitious plans, of selfish priesthoods; and, fifthly, of the harsh and relentless theories of conforming metaphysicians,—the doctrine of hell, as a located place of manifold terrific physical tortures, drawing in vast majorities of the human race, became established in the ruling creeds, and enthroned as an orthodox dogma."<sup>1</sup>

Having by these means invested the spirits of the dead with an imaginary existence, the next step was to provide a habitation for them while absent from their bodies. Here, again, they showed their strong attachment to their old, materialistic traditions, and their utter ignorance of any purely spiritual, immaterial being. They supposed that, in order for the soul to live, it must be connected with some animal body. The soul came into life connected with a human body, which it reluctantly leaves at death for a certain period till the body shall live again, when the soul will return to it. But what is the habitation of the soul during this interval? The idea of the *transmigration of souls* was luckily hit upon to fill this want. This doctrine is, that when the soul leaves the dying body, it immediately passes into another body which happens to be born at just that moment. When

<sup>1</sup>Doctrine of a Future Life, pp. 39, 40, 512.

this body also dies, the soul takes possession of another body, and so goes on changing bodies till its cycle of transmigrations is ended, and it returns to its place of habitation. This idea originated very early in the history of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul.

These facts are important, and should be well considered. We have seen that embalming bodies was the *first* form in which immortality was held by the ancients. The next step in the development of this doctrine was that the soul could live without this body, by being connected with some other body. This was "one of the earliest forms" in which the immortality of the soul began to be taught. Bunsen, as quoted before, says: "The Egyptians were the first who taught the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, a fact mentioned by all Greek writers from Herodotus to Aristotle, and one brilliantly confirmed by the monuments. A belief of the transmigration of the human soul into the bodies of animals, which was connected with it, is, as far as we can glean from the mythology of Asia, an Egyptian provincialism."<sup>1</sup>

Thus it will be seen that these two doctrines, viz., the survival of the soul after death, and its transmigration into other bodies, were inseparably connected at first, and both originated in Egypt. In those early times, they had not yet conceived the idea that the soul could live a moment unless connected with some animal body. This appears to be the true idea which originated the doctrine of the transmigration of souls. All souls, both good and bad, alike partook in this transmigration. Dr. Knapp remarks: "Originally this transmigration of souls was not regarded as a

<sup>1</sup>Egypt's Place in Uni. Hist., Vol. IV, p. 639.



matter of retribution, or as a means of purification. This turn was not given to the doctrine until a period of higher cultivation."<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER IV.

### HOW THE GREEKS AND ROMANS OBTAINED THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMMORTAL- ITY OF THE SOUL.

THAT the Greeks and Romans received their religious doctrines and worship very largely from Egypt, is agreed by all historians. I have already offered some evidence of this, and will present more here. Alger writes: "It seems plain that the Greeks derived many of their notions concerning the fate and state of the dead, from Egypt."<sup>2</sup>

Herodotus says, "And, indeed, the names of almost all the gods came from Egypt into Greece."<sup>3</sup> Another author thus remarks: "The ancient Egyptians are considered as the original inventors of the arts, science, and religion, of Greece."<sup>4</sup> "The absurdities of Grecian polytheism, as we are abundantly assured, were derived principally from Egypt."<sup>5</sup>

The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, as we have seen, was a leading notion in the Egyptian religion. The Greeks receive this with the rest, but at a later date than most other parts of their system. Says Herodotus, "The Egyptians

<sup>1</sup>Chris. Theol. §150, p. 523. <sup>2</sup>Doctrine of a Future Life, p. 101.

<sup>3</sup>Herod. II, 50.

<sup>4</sup>Elements of Mythology, p. 36.

<sup>5</sup>Mitford's Greece, Vol. I, p. 93.

also were the first who asserted the doctrine that the soul of man is immortal. . . . Some of the Greeks have adopted this opinion, some earlier, others later, as if it were their own."<sup>1</sup> This is a very plain testimony as to where the Greeks obtained that doctrine. Also, this doctrine was not known among them till learned from Egypt; even then, all did not at once receive it.

Two among the Greeks have been named as first teaching the soul's immortality to their countrymen; viz., *Orpheus* and *Pherecydes*. As to *Orpheus*, his history is all in fable. Indeed, it is not certain that such a man ever lived; much less, that he introduced this doctrine among the Greeks.<sup>2</sup>

The general testimony is in favor of *Pherecydes* as the first who taught the Greeks the notion. He lived about 600 years before Christ.<sup>3</sup> He learned his wisdom and his doctrines of the Egyptians. Josephus, in his book, "Against Apion," says: "But then, for those that first introduced philosophy [among the Greeks], and the consideration of things celestial and divine among them, such as *Pherecydes*, the Syrian, and *Pythagoras*, and *Thales*, all with one consent agree that they learned what they knew of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, and wrote but little. And these are the things which are supposed to be the oldest of all among the Greeks; and they have much ado to believe that the writings ascribed to those men are genuine."<sup>4</sup> The reader will notice that the teachings of *Pherecydes* and *Thales* are among *the oldest things* taught the Greeks, so much so that they hardly know whether to believe them or not. This was only 600 years before Christ.

<sup>1</sup>Herod., II, 123.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 209.

<sup>3</sup>Enfield's Hist. of Phil., p. 63.

<sup>4</sup>Book I, §2.



Moses had legislated for Israel about 1000 years before that, and even David and Solomon had slept with their fathers for about 400 years when this philosopher first taught the Greeks about the soul's immortality. So this doctrine was not very ancient among them. Enfield says: "Another tenet which is, by the universal consent of the ancients, ascribed to Pherecydes, is that of the immortality of the soul, for which he was, perhaps, indebted to the Egyptians. Cicero says that he was the first philosopher in whose writings this doctrine appeared. He also is said, and not improbably, to have taught the doctrine of the transmigration of the soul; for this was a tenet commonly received among the Egyptians, and afterward taught by Pythagoras."<sup>1</sup>

He not only borrowed the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the transmigration of souls, from the Egyptians, and taught it to the Greeks; but he added to it a refinement of his own, unknown till he first broached it; this was the idea that *the soul is a part of God*. It was called the *TOEN*, the *one*. Mr. Warburton has argued this point at some length, to show that this doctrine was of *Grecian*, and not of Egyptian, origin, and that Pherecydes, and Thales, his contemporary, were the inventors of it. In this he is probably correct.<sup>2</sup>

This being true, we have found the date of another important step in the history of this doctrine. All agree that the Greek philosophers much improved the doctrines which they learned from Egypt. This was one of the first of these improvements.

The next great name in antiquity that appears

<sup>1</sup>Hist. of Phil., p. 210.

<sup>2</sup>Div. Lega., Vol. II, pp. 238-240.

in the history of this doctrine, is Pythagoras. He was a Greek, born B. c. 550. The exact date is not certain. He was the disciple of Pherecydes. He passed twenty-two years in Egypt, and used great diligence in learning the doctrines of the priests. After traveling through many cities of Greece, he finally went to Crotona, in *Magna Græcia*, where he established a flourishing school, which was attended by hundreds.<sup>1</sup> The school, or sect, thus founded by him, was called the *Italic, or Pythagoric sect*. Of his visit to Egypt, and the result, Warburton says: "The last sort of people who went to Egypt for instruction, were the *philosophers*, properly so-called. . . . The first (as well as the most famous) of this class, and who gave philosophy its name and character, was Pythagoras. He and Plato, with others, traveled into Egypt, like their predecessors. . . . The ancients tell us of their long abode there; their hard condition of admittance into the sacred colleges; and their bringing away with them all the secret science of the priesthood. The result of all was, and it is worth our observation, that, from this time, *the Greek sophists* (now called philosophers) *began to cultivate the belief of a future state of rewards and punishments*; and at the very same time, the practice of the double doctrine; which two principles were the distinguishing badges of their character."<sup>2</sup>

Yes, these observations are important. 1. Pythagoras went into Egypt. 2. There he and Plato learned the doctrines of the priests. 3. The result was, that from that time, the Greek philosophers *began to cultivate this belief*. Then they had not cultivated that belief before; much less

<sup>1</sup>Enfield's Hist., p. 212.

<sup>2</sup>Div. Lega., Vol. II, pp. 108, 109.



had the people. There is an abundance of evidence to show that he is correct in these statements.

We will now briefly inquire into Pythagoras' doctrine concerning man and the soul. He seems to have made some advancement upon the doctrine of his master, Pherecydes. He taught that God was the great fountain or universal mind, from whence emanated the mind or souls of all intelligent beings; that the soul existed before it animated this body; that it will transmigrate through different bodies till it returns to God, its original source, and is re-absorbed into his essence. Like all before him, he still held the soul to be material. With regard to his idea of God, Enfield says, "He does not seem to have had the idea of a pure spirit." Enfield has thoroughly discussed the whole subject, so I glean the following facts from him:

1. We learn that Pythagoras retained all the advance steps which his master Pherecydes had made on the ancient faith. 2. He added much of his own theorizing. 3. He introduced a subtile mode of philosophizing, which confused the mind more than it enlightened it. He used many subtile divisions and distinctions, which were unknown before. He was the first one who assumed the name of philosopher. 4. He began to decry "*gross matter*" as corrupt, and far removed from God. 5. Yet he still held God, demons, and souls, to be material; but they were of subtile, ethereal substance.<sup>1</sup> The discovery that mind is entirely independent of matter, was reserved for another philosopher, born about 50 years later

<sup>1</sup>Hist. of Phil., p. 228, etc.  
Immortality.

than Pythagoras. This was *Anaxagoras*, one of the successors of Pythagoras in the Ionic school. Of this fact, Enfield testifies thus: "Plutarch confirms this account of the doctrine of Anaxagoras, and shows wherein it differed from that of his predecessors. 'The Ionic philosophers,' says he, 'who appeared before Anaxagoras, made fortune, or blind necessity, that is, the fortuitous, or necessary motion of the particles of matter, the first principle in nature; but Anaxagoras affirmed that a pure mind, perfectly free from all material concretions, governs the universe.' From these and other concurrent testimonies, it clearly appears that Anaxagoras was the first among the Greeks *who conceived of mind as detached from matter*, and as acting upon it with intelligence and design in the formation of the universe. The infinite mind, or deity, which his predecessors had confounded with matter, making them one universe, Anaxagoras conceived to have a separate existence, and to be simple, pure intelligence, capable of forming the eternal mass of matter, according to his pleasure."<sup>1</sup>

These facts are worthy of our notice. They show the gradual tendency among the ancients, to condemn matter, separate the mind from all dependence upon it, and finally to arrive at the conclusion that it is purely spiritual, and immaterial. But it required ages of philosophy to arrive at this conclusion. Anaxagoras broached his opinion, as above stated, about 450 B. C. Even he did not arrive at the notion that man's soul is purely spiritual and immaterial. This was reserved for another great philosopher, as we shall soon see. These things show what thorough ma-

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 87.



terialists all the ancients were, and how long it took to philosophize themselves out of it. It was not till common sense and sober reason were laid aside for "vain philosophy" and subtile sophistry, that they arrived at this sublime conclusion!

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## CHAPTER V.

### PLATO AND HIS DOCTRINE.

THE greatest name that appears in the history of the immortality of the soul, is that of PLATO. He was a Greek, born B. C. 428, and was one of the greatest philosophers of antiquity. "The influence of this sublime autocrat," says Alger, "in the realms of intellect, has transcended calculation. However coldly his thoughts may have been regarded by his cotemporary countrymen, they soon obtained cosmopolitan audience, and, surviving the ravages of time and ignorance, overleaping the bars of rival schools and sects, appreciated and diffused by the loftiest spirits of succeeding ages, closely blended with their own speculations by many Christian theologians, have held almost an unparalleled dominion over the minds of millions of men for more than fifty generations."<sup>1</sup>

His ideas concerning the immortality of the soul are now quoted with great satisfaction by believers in that doctrine. So much did he do for that doctrine that he is often called the father of it. Mr. Anthon expresses the sentiment which

<sup>1</sup>Doctrine of a Future Life, p. 185.

has led so many Christians to put Plato almost on a level with the Bible, when he says: "Whoever studies Plato, is treading on holy ground. So heathens always felt it. So even Christians confessed!"<sup>1</sup> The reason why Plato is thus honored by Christians, is revealed in the following statement of another author: "Plato is also celebrated as the first of the ancient philosophers who distinctly taught the doctrine of the immortality of the soul." That it was not very plainly taught before, we have already seen. It needed the genius of a Plato to invent arguments to prove the soul immortal; and Christians, in their defense of this doctrine, have only been able to take up and repeat his arguments. This fact Dr. Knapp honestly confesses: "In the varied web of proof [of the immortality of the soul] in our modern philosophical schools, the chief threads, and, as it were, the entire material, are of Grecian origin." "The followers of Socrates, however, did the most for this doctrine, and especially Plato."<sup>2</sup> Enfield says: "Even to the present day, Plato has many followers; his writings still give a tincture to the speculations and language of philosophy and theology."<sup>3</sup> This is true; hence, we shall be interested to learn about Plato and his doctrine of the soul.

At the age of twenty, Plato became the disciple of Socrates. At the end of eight years, Socrates dying, he left Greece in search of wisdom. "He first visited that part of Italy called Magna Grecia, where a celebrated school of philosophy had been established by Pythagoras, and was instructed in all the mysteries of the Pythagorean system, the subtilties of which he afterward too

<sup>1</sup>Classical Dict., Art. Plato.

<sup>2</sup>Chris. Theol., pp. 521, 522.

<sup>3</sup>Hist. of Phil. p. 115.



freely blended with the simple doctrine of Socrates."<sup>1</sup> Thus at an early period we find Plato a disciple of the Pythagoreans and freely receiving their doctrines, the chief of which was the immortality of the soul. What Plato represents Socrates as saying about the immortality of the soul, is only Plato's own words and ideas put into the mouth of Socrates; hence, is no proof that Socrates ever held or taught that doctrine. "It is remarkable," says Leland, "that though there were several sects of philosophers which professed to derive their original from Socrates, scarce any of them taught the immortality of the soul as the doctrine of their schools, except Plato and his disciples."<sup>2</sup>

Plato went to Egypt and spent several years there learning of the priests. Hippolytus thus states: "Pythagoras and Plato derived these tenets originally from the Egyptians, and introduced their novel opinions among the Greeks." "The origin, then, from which Plato derived his theory in the *Timæus*, is the wisdom of the Egyptians."<sup>3</sup> Then, to the Pythagoreans first, and to the Egyptians next, was Plato indebted for his theories and doctrines.

Having learned the fountain from whence Plato drew his doctrines, we will now briefly examine his theory of the soul. We find him agreeing with his master, Pythagoras, 1. In the pre-existence of the soul. 2. That it was an emanation from God. 3. That it was immortal. 4. That it transmigrated through different bodies. And 5. That it would finally be absorbed into the Deity. We shall also find that he further improved and

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 116.

<sup>2</sup>Necessity of Revelation, Vol. II, p. 319.

<sup>3</sup>Refutation of Heresies, Chaps. xv, xvii.

spiritualized this doctrine, 1. By making the soul purely spiritual and immaterial; and 2. By making the transmigration a *moral* doctrine instead of one of necessity.

Enfield thus describes Plato's doctrine of God and matter: "Plato supposes two eternal and independent causes of all things; one, that *by* which all things are made, which is God; the other, that *from* which all things are made, which is matter."<sup>1</sup> Plato held that God did not *create* matter, but simply molded it. He taught that baneful doctrine that *matter is the source and origin of all evil*. Says a learned author: "It was also a doctrine of Plato that there is in matter a necessary, but blind and refractory, force; and that hence arises a propensity in matter to disorder and deformity, which is the cause of all the imperfections which appear in the works of God, and the origin of evil. . . . This is the cause of the mixture of good and evil which is found in the material world."<sup>2</sup> The effect of this doctrine was to degrade matter and exalt mind, or the soul. Again, the above author continues: "Visible things were regarded by Plato as fleeting *shades*, and *ideas*, as the only permanent substances. These he conceived to be the proper objects of science, to a mind raised by divine contemplation above the perpetually varying scenes of the material world."<sup>3</sup> Here the same effort is seen to decry matter and exalt pure mind, spirit, or soul.

One fact is worthy of special attention; viz., that *Plato places his doctrine of the human soul at the head of his philosophy*. Thus testifies Enfield: "Plato refers to the head of the philoso-

<sup>1</sup>Hist. of Phil., p. 129.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 133.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 132.



phy of nature, his doctrine concerning the human soul: a doctrine which he treats obscurely on the ground of his assumed hypothesis concerning spiritual emanations from the divine nature. He appears to have taught that the soul of man is derived by emanation from God; but that this emanation was not immediate, but through the intervention of the soul of the world, which was itself debased by some material admixture, and, consequently, that the human soul, receding further from the first intelligence, is inferior in perfection to the soul of the world. . . . The relation which the human soul in its original constitution bears to matter, Plato appears to have considered as the source of moral evil. Since the soul of the world, by partaking of matter, has within itself the seeds of evil, he inferred that this must be the case still more with respect to the soul of man. . . . To account for the origin and present state of human souls, Plato supposes that when God formed the universe, he separated from the soul of the world inferior souls, equal in number to the stars, and assigned to each its proper celestial abode; but that these souls (by what means, or for what reason, does not appear) were sent down to the earth into human bodies, as into a sepulcher or prison. He ascribes to this cause the depravity and misery to which human nature is liable; and maintains that it is only by disengaging itself from all animal passions, and rising above sensible objects to the contemplation of the world of intelligence, that the soul of man can be prepared to return to its original habitation."<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see that Plato held that the soul was a spiritual emanation from God; that the source of

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 134.

all evil is in matter; that the body is a prison for the soul; that by contemplation the soul may return to God; etc. "Lastly, Plato teaches, in express terms, the doctrine of the immortality of the rational soul; but he has rested the proof of this doctrine upon the more fanciful parts of his system."<sup>1</sup> The learned Mr. Anthon thus relates Plato's arguments for the soul's immortality as found in the Phædon. Be it remembered that, in this dialogue, Socrates is only used as a mouth-piece for Plato to express his own ideas with. "Socrates," writes Anthon, "undertakes to prove the immortality of the soul by its *spirituality*; and we have here the first traces of a demonstration which modern philosophy, under the guidance of revelation [?], has carried on to so successful a result. The doctrine which Plato here puts into the mouth of Socrates is not entirely pure; it is amalgamated with the Pythagorean hypothesis of the metempsychosis, and with all sorts of fables borrowed from the Greek mythology."<sup>2</sup> Here we have Plato proving the immortality of the soul by its *spirituality*. This was the first trace of that idea which modern Christian philosophy has carried on. This shows the origin of that doctrine. *Plato was its legitimate father.*

Plato taught that the transmigrations which any soul has to undergo are for its sins. When it is freed from sin, it will be freed from transmigrating, will no longer be connected with a natural body, but will return to God and be re-absorbed into his being. If a soul has sinned much, and is very vile, it will be born into the body of a degraded animal, as a pig or a dog. If it has been pretty good, it will occupy the body of a better animal,

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>2</sup>Classical Dict., Art. Plato.



as a horse or a man, etc. Warburton and Knapp say this was a refinement of Plato's upon the original doctrine of transmigration. This was the only hell that Plato really believed in. The vulgar notions of hell, hades, tartarus, and the torments there, he rejected as fables, though he often speaks of them in accommodation to the popular notion. So say Leland and others.

Plato held that the soul was a part of God. Thus writes Bishop Warburton: "Plato, without any softening, frequently calls the soul, God, and a part of God."<sup>1</sup> This is one of his strong proofs of the soul's immortality. As a part of God, it will be re-absorbed into him either at death or as soon as sufficiently purified by transmigration. With Plato, the soul was immortal only as a part of God, into whom it would finally be re-absorbed and lose all personal existence.

We will now briefly notice the history and influence of Plato's teachings and followers. After finishing his travels, Plato returned to Greece, where he established a philosophical school, in which he taught his theory of the human soul, etc. It was largely attended, and became very famous and influential. Cotemporary with Plato and his school, there were several other schools of philosophy, as the Stoics, etc.; but as none of them taught the immortality of the soul, we are not now interested in them. It was through Plato and his disciples that this doctrine came into the church; hence, we are interested in their history. Enfield says: "The school of Plato long continued famous, but passed through several changes, on account of which it was successively distinguished into the *Old*, the *Middle*, and the *New Academy*."

<sup>1</sup>Divine Lega., Vol. II, p. 220.

The Old Academy consisted of those followers of Plato who taught the doctrine of their master without mixture or corruption."<sup>1</sup> The Old Academy continued till about three hundred years before Christ.

Then, under the teaching of ARCESILAUS, it passed into the Middle Academy. It differed from the Old in asserting that "everything is uncertain to human understanding, and, consequently, that all confident assertions are unreasonable." This school tended strongly to skepticism. It continued less than one hundred years, and met with much opposition. The New Academy succeeded it. CARNEADES, born B. C. 214, was its first teacher. It came back nearer to the doctrine of Plato. It allowed that a strong probability of truth might be attained by sufficient evidence. This school continued about one hundred years. "The last preceptor of the Platonic school in Greece was Antiochus of Ascalon. . . . He resigned the Academic chair B. C. 80. After his time, the professors of the Academic philosophy were dispersed by the tumults of war, and the school itself was transferred to Rome."<sup>2</sup> Platonism, having found its way to Rome, soon made its way into the Roman church, as may be easily shown.

<sup>1</sup>Hist. of Phil., p. 137.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 142-146.



## CHAPTER VI.

## PLATONISM AT ROME.

HAVING traced the history of Platonism to Rome, we are now ready to note its effects there. That Rome received its religion mostly from Greece, is attested by all writers. "The religion of the Romans," says a learned author, "appears to have been that of Greece—a mixture of Syrian and Egyptian fables. The principal gods of both people were the same."<sup>1</sup> "The religious system of the Romans," says Mr. Fisk, "gives clear evidence of its Grecian descent, being in scarcely any part of it a native growth, but borrowed chiefly from the Greek colonies in Italy."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Good says, "The philosophers of Rome present us with nothing new; for they merely followed the dogmas of those of Greece."<sup>3</sup> For several hundred years, the Romans were a very rude, barbarous people; and it was not till near the time of Christ that they began to cultivate philosophy among them.<sup>4</sup> About this time, Rome opened its arms to Grecian philosophy, which, "having been thus transplanted to Rome, the exotic plant flourished with vigor in its new soil."<sup>5</sup> Very soon, every Grecian sect of philosophy had its numerous patrons among the Romans.

Platonism was embraced by some very illustrious men, among whom was Cicero. He was a great admirer of Plato; and said and wrote much to prove the immortality of the soul. He did for

<sup>1</sup>Elements of Mythology, p. 244.

<sup>2</sup>Class. Antiq., p. 86.

<sup>3</sup>Book of Nat., p. 380. <sup>4</sup>Enfield's Hist. of Phil., pp. 293, 294.

<sup>5</sup>Id., p. 296.

that doctrine among the Romans, what Plato had done for it among the Greeks. Rome was then mistress of the world. This brought all nations to Rome, and threw them much together.

#### THE ALEXANDRIAN SCHOOL.

About this time, there was a singular school started at Alexandria, in Egypt, then a part of the Roman empire. It was called the Eclectic or New Platonic School. The origin of it was this: Certain philosophers, seeing the endless disputes and contradictions among the many different sects of philosophy and religion, formed the plan of gleaning from all whatever was good and consonant to reason, and rejecting the rest. Platonism was the basis of this school, and the doctrine of the immortality of the soul held a conspicuous place in it. It was through this school, further improved by Ammonius, that this doctrine came into the church; hence we are interested in it. It is not certain just when it started; but probably not far from the birth of Christ. So say Dr. Mosheim, Enfield, the Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge, etc.<sup>1</sup> One Potamon, a Platonist, is supposed to have been its founder.<sup>2</sup> Says the Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge: "They held Plato in the highest esteem, but did not scruple to join with his doctrine whatever they thought conformable to reason in the tenets of other philosophers."<sup>3</sup>

But the man who did the most to make this school what it finally became in its influence on Christianity, was Ammonius Saccas, who was

<sup>1</sup>Mosheim's Commentaries, Vol. I, p. 38; Enfield's Hist. of Phil., p. 343; Enc. Rel. Knowl., Art. Eclectics.

<sup>2</sup>Mosheim's Com., Vol. I, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup>Art. Eclectics.



born toward the close of the second century. He was born of Christian parents, and taught that religion; but he apostatized, either wholly or in part, to heathenism. He joined the Eclectic School at Alexandria, and undertook to unite heathenism and Christianity into one system. The learned Dr. Mosheim thus states with regard to this man and his work: "This [Eclectic] mode of philosophizing was changed near the close of the [second] century, when Ammonius Saccas, with great applause, opened a school at Alexandria, and laid the foundation for that sect which is called the New Platonic. This man was born and educated a Christian; and, perhaps, made pretensions to Christianity all his life. Being possessed of great fecundity of genius, as well as eloquence, he undertook to bring all systems of philosophy and religion into harmony; or, in other words, to teach a philosophy by which all philosophers, and the men of all religions, the Christian not excepted, might unite together and have fellowship. . . . Ammonius held that all sects *held one and the same system of truth*, with only some difference in the mode of *stating* it, and some minute difference in their conceptions; so that, by means of suitable explanations, they might, with little difficulty, be brought into one body. He moreover held this new and singular principle, that the popular religions, and likewise the Christian, must be understood and explained according to this common philosophy of all the sects; and that the fables of the vulgar pagans and their priests, and so, too, the interpretations of the disciples of Christ, ought to be separated from their respective religions.

"The grand object of Ammonius, to bring all

sects and religions into harmony, required him to do much violence to the sentiments and opinions of all parties, philosophers, priests, and Christians; and, particularly, by means of allegorical interpretations, to remove very many impediments out of his way. . . . To these assumptions he added the common doctrines of the Egyptians (among whom he was born and educated), concerning the universe and the Deity; as constituting *one great whole* [Pantheism], concerning the eternity of the world, *the nature of the soul*, providence, the government of this world by demons, and other received doctrines, all of which he considered as true, and not to be called in question."<sup>1</sup> Enfield says about the same of this school.<sup>2</sup>

Ammonius probably died about A. D. 243. "The school of Ammonius was continued, and the Eclectic system completed, by the most celebrated of his disciples, Platinus, the chief of the Alexandrian Platonists, from whom the school afterward took its name."<sup>3</sup> He was born A. D. 205. By his great abilities, the school became very famous, and very successful in its object, as we shall see. Plato's doctrine of the immortality of the soul he implicitly received. The following, from Enfield, will illustrate this: "It was another proof of the fanatical spirit of Platinus that, though well skilled in the medical art, he had such a contempt for the body that he could never be prevailed upon to make use of any means to cure . . . or alleviate his pain. He had learned from Pythagoras and Plato that the soul is sent into the body for the punishment of its former sins,

<sup>1</sup>Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, pp. 111-113.

<sup>2</sup>Id., p. 328.

<sup>3</sup>Hist. of Phil., p. 327.



and must, in this prison, pass through a severe servitude before it can be sufficiently purified to return to the divine fountain from which it flowed. . . . When he found his end approaching, he said to Eustachius, 'The divine principle within me is now hastening to unite itself with that divine Being which animates the universe;' *herein expressing a leading principle of his philosophy*, that the human soul is an emanation from the divine nature, and will return to the source whence it proceeded."<sup>1</sup> This shows what a prominent place Plato's doctrine of the human soul held in this system.

Platinus died A. D. 270. "The succession of the Platonic or Eclectic school in Alexandria terminated in Damascus, a native of Syria."<sup>2</sup> That this school was chiefly founded upon the doctrines of Plato, especially that relating to the soul, is attested by all authorities on this subject. Dr. Mosheim says: "Those who originated this species of philosophy [the Eclectic] took their leading principles from the system of Plato; considering almost everything which he advanced respecting the Deity, the soul, the world, the demons, as *indisputable axioms*."<sup>3</sup> Plato was the highest authority with them. To him, all, even Christ, must bow. It is their doctrine concerning the soul that we are especially interested in; and this, we see, was the same as taught by Plato, and was received directly from him. Their doctrines on this point are thus clearly described by Mosheim: "Man, therefore, while he continued here below, was supposed to be compounded of two principles, acting in direct opposition to each other: 1st, a terrestrial and corrupt or vitiated body; 2d, a

<sup>1</sup>Id., p. 330.

<sup>2</sup>Id., p. 340.

<sup>3</sup>Commentaries, Vol. 1, chap. I, § 30, pp. 38, 39.

soul partaking of the nature of the Deity, and derived from the region of purity and light. The soul, or ethereal part, being, through its connection with the body, confined, as it were, within a prison of matter, was constantly exposed to the danger of becoming involved in ignorance and acquiring every sort of evil propensity from the impulse and contagion of the vitiated mass by which it was enveloped.”<sup>1</sup>

“The body, on the contrary, as the source of every depraved appetite, was, according to them, to be reduced and brought into subjection by hunger, thirst, and every other species of mortification; and neither to be supported by flesh or wine, nor indulged in any of those gratifications to which it is naturally prone; in fact, a constant self-denial was to be rigorously observed in everything which might contribute either to the convenience or *amœnitas* [Latin, pleasantness] of this life; so that the material frame being thus by every means weakened and brought low, the celestial spirit might the more readily escape from its contagious influence, and regain its native liberty. Hence it was that the Manichæans, the Marcionites, the Encratites, and others, passed their lives in one continued course of austerity and mortification.” “Every one who laid claim to the character of a wise man, was strictly enjoined by him [Ammonius] to assert the liberty of his *divine* and *immortal* part, by extracting it, as it were, from all connection with the body; the consequence of which would be, that it would, even in this life, enjoy communion with the Deity; and when death should *disencumber* it of every gross and *corporeal* tie, escape, free and unpolluted, into

<sup>1</sup>Commentaries, Vol. I, p. 45.



the arms of the first great Parent of all things.”<sup>1</sup>

It would seem that a very little penetration would discern in this the original of the modern theological doctrine of the immortality of the soul, going to Heaven at death, etc. With this school, the resurrection of the body was either of little importance or denied entirely.<sup>2</sup> This would naturally follow from their view of the impurity of matter. These facts I think sufficient to give a clear idea of the doctrines of this celebrated school concerning man, both soul and body.

#### ITS GREAT POPULARITY.

We will briefly notice how popular and extensive this school became. All agree that it acquired a wonderful degree of eminence, and soon extended itself over most of the Roman Empire, and eclipsed the glory of all other sects. To this effect writes Mosheim: “While the emperors and magistrates were striving to subvert the Christian commonwealth by means of laws and punishments, it was assailed with craft and subtlety, during this whole century, by the philosophers of the Ammonian school, who assumed the name of Platonists, extended their disciples over nearly all the Roman Empire, and gradually obscured the glory of all other sects.” Again: “The school of Ammonius, the origin and dogmas of which have been already stated, *gradually cast all others into the background*. From Egypt it spread in a short time over nearly the whole Roman Empire, and drew after it almost all persons inclined to attend to metaphysical studies. This prosperity of the sect was owing especially to Platinus, the

<sup>1</sup>Ibid, pp. 47, 357.  
Immortality.

<sup>2</sup>Mosheim's Com., Vol. I, p. 233.

most distinguished disciple of Ammonius, a man of intellectual acumen, and formed by nature for abstruse investigation. For he taught first in Persia, and afterward at Rome and in Campania, to vast concourses of youth; and embodied his precepts in various books."<sup>1</sup> Says Enfield: "The pernicious influence of the Eclectic system, both upon opinions and manners, through many succeeding ages, will be seen in the sequel."<sup>2</sup>

Says Mosheim: "It is almost incredible what a number of pupils, in a short time, issued from the school of this man [Ammonius]. But among them, no one is more celebrated than Porphyry, a Syrian, who spread over Sicily, and many other countries, the system of his master, enlarged with new discoveries and sedulously polished. At Alexandria, almost no other philosophy was publicly taught from the times of Ammonius down to the sixth century."<sup>3</sup>

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## CHAPTER VII.

### PLATONIC DOCTRINE OF THE SOUL RECEIVED INTO THE CHURCH.

THE way is now open for us to show that the Platonic doctrine of the immortality of the human soul in all its parts, and with all its consequences, was brought into the Christian church by this Alexandrian school of philosophy. Of this there

<sup>1</sup>Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, p. 161; Com., Vol. II, p. 103.

<sup>2</sup>Hist. of Phil., p. 349.

<sup>3</sup>Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, Cent. 3, Chap. 1, pp. 161, 162.



is, alas! but too much proof. Ammonius undertook to unite all religions, both pagan and Christian. To accomplish this, says Mosheim, it "required him to do much violence to the sentiments and opinions of all parties, philosophers, priests, and Christians; and particularly by means of *allegorical interpretations*, to remove very many impediments out of his way."<sup>1</sup> "The whole Ammoniac school was devoted to *allegory*."<sup>2</sup> By this means he could *explain away* any disagreement between the different parties.

The first step which was taken toward apostasy, was in attending the school and cultivating a taste for its philosophy. An eminent historian says: "Of these [changes] the most considerable and important are to be attributed to a taste for the cultivation of philosophy and human learning, which, during the preceding [first] century, if not altogether treated with neglect and contempt by the Christians, had at least been wisely kept under, and by no means permitted to blend itself with religion; but in the age of which we are now treating [the second century], burst forth on a sudden into a flame, and spread with the utmost rapidity throughout a considerable part of the church. This may be accounted for, in some measure, from its having been the practice of the many Greek philosophers, who, in the course of this century, were induced to embrace Christianity, not only to retain their pristine denomination, garb, and mode of living, but also to persist in recommending the study of philosophy, and initiating youth therein. In proof of this, we may,

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>2</sup>Hist. of Chris. in First Three Cent., Vol. I, Cent. 2, §32, p. 362.

from amidst numerous other examples, adduce in particular that of Justin, the celebrated philosopher and martyr. The immediate nursery, and very cradle, as it were, of Christian philosophy, must, however, be placed in the celebrated seminary which long flourished at Alexandria, under the denomination of the Catechetical School. For the persons who presided therein, in the age of which we are treating, namely, Pantæus, Athenagoras, and Clement of Alexandria, not only engaged with ardor in the cultivation of philosophy themselves, but also exerted their influence in persuading those whom they were educating for the office of teachers in the church, to follow their example in this respect, and make it their practice to associate philosophical principles with those of religion.”<sup>1</sup>

The object they had in view he thus states: “The Christian teachers were well aware of what essential benefit it would be in promoting their cause, not only with the multitude, but also amongst men of the higher orders, could the philosophers, whose authority and estimation with the world was unbounded, be brought to embrace Christianity. With a view, therefore, of accomplishing this desirable object, they not only adopted the study of philosophy themselves, but became loud in their recommendation of it to others, declaring that the difference between Christianity and philosophy was but trifling, and consisted merely in the former’s being of a nature somewhat more perfect than the latter. And it is most certain that this kind of conduct was so far productive of the desired effect as to cause not a

<sup>1</sup>Mosheim’s Hist. of the First Three Cent., Vol. I, Cent. 2, §25, p. 339.



few of the philosophers to enroll themselves under the Christian banner. Those who have perused the various works written by such of the ancient philosophers as had been led to embrace Christianity, cannot have failed to remark that the Christian discipline was regarded by all of them in no other light than as a certain mode of philosophizing."<sup>1</sup>

The effect of this was soon manifest. The above-quoted author says: "Hence it came to pass that the greater part of these Platonists, upon comparing the Christian religion with the system of Ammonius, were led to imagine that nothing could be more easy than a transition from the one to the other, and, to the great detriment to the Christian cause, *were induced to embrace Christianity without feeling it necessary to abandon scarcely any of their former principles.*"<sup>2</sup>

With these facts before us, can we wonder that the truth was lost, and that heathen notions took its place? The immortality of the soul was the leading doctrine which these Platonic philosophers held who "did not feel it necessary to abandon scarcely any of their former principles," on becoming Christians! The reason why that heathen doctrine spread so widely and so rapidly in the church, is shown in the following from an eminent historian: "Many from the different sects of philosophers, *especially from the Platonists*, and also from among the rhetoricians, embraced Christianity; and they were honored for their erudition and talents, by being made bishops and presbyters."<sup>3</sup> Thus they disseminated their doctrines everywhere. And, says the same author: "In

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., §26, pp. 346, 347.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., §32, p. 366.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Vol. II, Cent. 3, §26, p. 140.

fact, there are but few points of Christian theology which the teachers who were inflamed with this eager desire to produce a union between Christianity and philosophy left untouched."<sup>1</sup> Another historian bears this testimony: "Very soon after the rise of Christianity, many persons who had been educated in the schools of the philosophers becoming converts to the Christian faith, the doctrines of the Grecian sects, and especially of Platonism, were interwoven with the simple truths of pure religion. As the Eclectic philosophy spread, heathen and Christian doctrines were still more intimately blended, till at last both were almost entirely lost in the thick clouds of ignorance and barbarism which covered the earth."<sup>2</sup> Of the Eclectic school, he says: "The muddy waters sent forth from this polluted spring were spread through the most celebrated seats of learning, and were even permitted, as we shall afterward see, to mingle with the pure stream of Christian doctrine."<sup>3</sup> Once more; of the teachers of the church, he says: "Through several centuries they partook of the spirit of the Alexandrian school, and the *Eclectic method of philosophizing, Platonized Christianity*."<sup>4</sup>

#### PLATONISM OPPOSED.

But was all this heathen philosophy and pagan doctrine received into the church without opposition? No, indeed. Many, nay, all, of the more pious men warmly opposed it, for they foresaw its effects. Mosheim thus records the controversy:

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., Vol. I, Cent. 2, §34, p. 373.

<sup>2</sup>Enfield's Hist. of Phil., p. 8.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Book 3, Chap. ii, §4, p. 331.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., Book 6, Chap. ii, p. 453.



“The rise, however, of this taste for philosophical speculation, and the ascendancy which they perceived it gradually acquiring in the minds of so many of their teachers, became a source of the most poignant regret to all such as continued steadfastly attached to that ancient and simple species of piety which had been delivered down by the apostles and their disciples, inasmuch as they saw reason to fear that the cause of celestial truth might be thereby materially injured, as in reality proved to be the case, and that divine wisdom would not long retain either its proper value or dignity in the estimation of mankind. In consequence of this, the Christian church became divided into two parties, which opposed each other with the utmost warmth. . . . The issue of this dispute, which lasted for a considerable while, at length was, that victory declared itself in favor of the patrons of philosophy, and that those teachers came to be the most respected who, in unfolding the doctrines of religion, called in the aid of philosophical principles and precepts.”<sup>1</sup>

In his “Ecclesiastical History,” the same writer, after naming the class who were in favor of introducing Platonism into the church, adds: “*But a great majority thought otherwise.*”<sup>2</sup> “But gradually the friends of philosophy and literature acquired the ascendancy. To this issue Origen contributed very much; for, having early imbibed the principles of the *new Platonism*, he inauspiciously applied them to theology, and earnestly recommended them to the numerous youth who attended on his instructions. And the greater the influence of this man, which quickly spread

<sup>1</sup>Commentaries, Vol. I, Cent. 2. §21, pp. 343, 344.

<sup>2</sup>Vol. I, Book 1, Part 2, Chap. 1, p. 115.

over the *whole Christian world*, the more readily was his method of explaining the sacred doctrine propagated."<sup>1</sup> Hence, in a short time, Bible truth, and those who advocated it, were put down and held in contempt. Says our author: "There were various persons of this sort in the fourth century, who were disgusted with the progress of superstition and of errors respecting the true nature of religion, and who opposed the general current; but the only fruit of their labor was, that *they were branded with infamy*."<sup>2</sup> Rome came in and condemned them as heretics, and thus silenced all opposition.

#### ALLEGORICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE SCRIPTURES ADOPTED.

But how could these Platonic doctrines be harmonized with the Bible? How could the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, conscious state of the dead, etc., be reconciled with the opposite doctrine everywhere taught in the Scriptures? This was, indeed, a serious difficulty; but the genius of these Platonizing teachers devised a mode of harmonizing the two. It was this: They assumed that all the Bible was to be understood, not literally, or according to its plain, obvious meaning, *but allegorically*, or as *metaphors*, under which the truth was concealed. By this method, of course, they could make it teach any doctrine they pleased! Clement and Origen, especially the latter, were the chief movers in this work.

Thus writes a high authority: "One of the earliest evils that flowed from this immoderate attachment to philosophy, was the violence to which

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 162.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 274.



it gave rise in the interpretation of the holy Scriptures. For, whereas the Christians had, from a very early period, imbibed the notion that under the words, laws and facts, recorded in the sacred Volumes, there is a latent sense concealed, an opinion which they appear to have derived from the Jews, no sooner did this passion for philosophizing take possession of their minds, than they began with wonderful subtlety to press the Scriptures into their service, in support of all such principles and maxims as appeared to them consonant to reason; and at the same time most wretchedly to pervert and twist every part of those divine Oracles which opposed itself to their philosophical tenets or notions." Of Clement, he says: "Whatever, therefore, appears to him just and consonant to reason in the maxims or tenets of the philosophers, he is sure to discover laid down somewhere in the books of the Old Testament; and this leads him, not unfrequently, to *strain* and *distort* in a most extraordinary manner, the words of Moses, and the other sacred writers, in order to make them, apparently, speak one and the same language with Plato and the rest of the philosophers of Greece."<sup>1</sup> Origen, who lived in the close of the second, and first half of the third centuries, was the disciple of Clement, and also for a long time sat under the teaching of Ammonius. These teachers he followed, and carried out their Platonic doctrines still further, especially with respect to the immortality of the soul.

The following quotations from Mosheim will clearly show all this: "Origen's new method of explaining and illustrating religious truths by

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., Vol. I, Cent. 2, §33, p. 368, and Note 2.

means of philosophy, required also a new method of expounding the sacred Scriptures. For, meeting with many things in the Scriptures repugnant to the decisions of his philosophy, he deemed it necessary to devise some method of removing this disagreement. And as it would add confirmation to his opinions, if he could make it appear that they were supported by the authority of Scripture, some plausible way was to be devised which should make his speculations appear to be taught in the holy Oracles."<sup>1</sup> Hence, "perceiving that many of the facts and declarations of the Bible conflicted with the principles of his philosophy, he felt the necessity of resorting to some means of escaping their force; and he could find none more easy and effectual than this assumption: Whatever in the sacred books conflicts with my philosophy, must not be taken literally, but must be converted into allegory. Safely posted behind this rule, he could easily resist whatever the Scriptures might oppose to his opinions."<sup>2</sup> "I have," says Mosheim, "already touched upon the causes which led him to adopt this very dangerous rule for interpreting sacred history. They are obvious to every attentive reader. The statements of the Bible respecting the creation of the world, the origin of man, etc., was contrary to the precepts of his philosophy; and, therefore, he would sooner deny the truth of a portion of sacred history, than give up his philosophy."<sup>3</sup>

Was the Platonic or Ammonian doctrine of the *soul* among those errors which he wished to make the Bible uphold? Yes; hear our historian on this point: "The foundation of all his faults was, that he fully believed nothing to be more true and

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., Vol. II, p. 165.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 170.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 184.



certain than what the philosophy he received from Ammonius taught him respecting God, the world, SOULS, demons, etc.; and, therefore, he in a measure *recast* and *remodeled* the doctrines of Christ, after the pattern of that philosophy.”<sup>1</sup> Here we have the doctrine of Christ recast and remodeled, and the Bible distorted, to make them fit the heathen doctrine of the soul, and other errors. Our author continues: “He could not discover in the sacred books all that he considered true, so long as he adhered to the literal sense; but allow him to abandon the literal sense, and to search for recondite meanings, and those books would contain Plato, Aristotle, Zeno, and the whole tribe of philosophers. And thus nearly all those who would model Christianity according to their own fancy, or their favorite system of philosophy, have run into this mode of interpreting Scripture.”<sup>2</sup> Behold here the origin of the figurative interpretation of the Bible. It was invented expressly to make it harmonize with Plato’s doctrine of the soul, etc.

So thoroughly was Origen possessed with Plato’s doctrine of the immortal soul, that though he professed to be a Christian and to believe the Bible, yet, says Hagenback, in his “History of Christian Doctrine”: “Origen teaches that a belief in the doctrine of the resurrection of the body is not absolutely essential to the profession of Christianity, *provided the immortality of the soul be maintained.*”<sup>3</sup>

This is but the natural fruit of that doctrine. If the soul is immortal, and lives without the body, what use of a resurrection?

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 159.  
Note 8.

<sup>2</sup>Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, Cent. 3, Part 2, p. 181,

<sup>3</sup>Vol. II, p. 404.

The influence and authority of Origen extended far and wide, so much so, that Mosheim says: "It would, therefore, be no mistake to say, that, as Constantine the Great imparted a new form to the civil state, so this Egyptian imparted a new form to the theology of Christians. . . . Origen introduced the Academy almost entire into the Church."<sup>1</sup> "Indeed, it is not to be concealed, that he coincided with Ammonius in the belief that the popular religions, if their fables and superstitions were excluded, might, in a measure, be combined with Christianity."<sup>2</sup> "He unhesitatingly applies to Christ's soul whatever he had learned respecting the human soul in the school of his master Ammonius."<sup>3</sup>

#### PLATO'S DOCTRINE OF THE SOUL ORIGINATED THE FANATICS, MYSTICS, MONKS, ETC.

As soon as Plato's doctrine of the immortality of the soul was thoroughly received among Christians, it produced as its natural fruits a most fanatical and wild set of men, the Mystics and Monks. Says our author: "This new species of philosophy. . . . produced that gloomy set of men called Mystics; whose system, if divested of its Platonic notions respecting *the origin and nature of the soul, will be a lifeless and senseless corpse*. It laid a foundation, too, for that indolent mode of life, which was afterward adopted by many, and particularly by numerous tribes of *Monks*."<sup>4</sup> Enfield, in his "History of Philosophy," shows the same thing at some length.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Com., Vol. II, Cent. 3, §27, p. 145, Note.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 153.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 147. <sup>4</sup>Mosh. Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, Cent. 2, Part 2, p. 115.

<sup>5</sup>P. 453.



“For it is well known,” again writes Mosheim, “that the true and genuine Mystics adopted, as the very basis and ground-work of their discipline, those principles respecting the Deity, the world, *the soul, and the nature of man*, which the Christians had borrowed from the Egyptian and modern Platonic philosophy, and were accustomed, from this century downwards, to communicate merely to a select number of auditors. . . . Upon the introduction of the Egyptian and Platonic philosophy, this [original] simple mode of life was reduced into the form of an art, and interwoven with such maxims respecting the Deity, *the human soul, and the nature of man*, as were thought most consonant to reason. . . . Hither, also, may we refer the origin of Monks, Hermits, and Caenobites, whose rules and institutions are uniformly grounded upon the principle of delivering THE IMMORTAL SPIRIT from the oppression under which it groans in being connected with the body; of purifying it from the corruptions of sense, and of rendering it fit to be admitted into the presence of the Deity in the realms of everlasting light and life.”<sup>1</sup>

Can any one fail to see here from whence the Christians obtained the doctrine of an immortal spirit in man? The Monks and Hermits spoken of, were the most wild, fanatical, and miserable set of men who have ever disgraced humanity. They left the society of men, went into the mountains and deserts, lived like the beasts, on grass, stood on the tops of pillars for years, emaciated their bodies in all possible ways, by hunger, thirst, nakedness, and filthiness. They wore their clothes till they literally rotted off, and acted like

<sup>1</sup>Com., Vol. I, Cent. 2, §35, pp. 380, 381.

wild beasts. All this was done to weaken and wear out *the sinful body*, and free *the immortal soul* within! Celibacy of the Romish priests, which has been such a scandal to Christianity, also grew out of the same idea.

Platonism continued to obscure more and more the light of the gospel, till it deepened into the midnight of the Dark Ages. Thus of the fourth century we read: "Nearly all who attempted philosophy in this century, were of the sect called Modern Platonists. . . . The Christians, from the times of Constantine the Great, devoted much more attention to the study of philosophy and the liberal arts than they had done before."<sup>1</sup> Of the fifth century the same author remarks: "The superstitious notions and human devices by which religion was before much clogged, were very considerably augmented. . . . As no one in those times objected to Christians' retaining the opinions of their pagan ancestors respecting the soul, heroes, demons, temples, and the like, and then transferring them into their devotions; and as no one proposed utterly to abolish the ancient pagan institutions, but only to alter them somewhat and purify them; it was unavoidable that the religion and the worship of Christians should in this way become corrupted."<sup>2</sup>

But I need not pursue this painful subject any further. The evidence is overwhelming that Christianity in the third century, and onward, was grossly corrupted by Platonic philosophy; and that here was when Plato's doctrine of the soul found its way into the church. I will close with the following candid confession from an able

<sup>1</sup>Mosh. Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, pp. 229, 230.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 342, 343.



orthodox writer: "We would express our conviction that the idea of the immortality of the soul has no source in the gospel; that it comes, on the contrary, *from the Platonists*, and that it was just when the coming of Christ was denied in the church, or at least began to be lost sight of, *that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul came in to replace that of the resurrection*. This was about the time of Origen."<sup>1</sup>

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### PAGAN AND CHRISTIAN DOCTRINES OF THE SOUL COMPARED.

I HAVE already shown that the early Christians did receive from Platonism their doctrine of the soul. I have also shown that Christianity was grossly corrupted by the reception of pagan tenets, and that great numbers of the pagans who embraced Christianity, still retained all their former notions, especially with regard to the soul. I will now present a few more points, and compare the pagan doctrine of the soul, and hell torments, with the same as held by Christians. This will show them to be the same. Scores of good authors might be cited, stating in the strongest terms that Christianity was deeply corrupted with pagan doctrines and practices, from the last part of the second century till Catholicism was fully established, and the night of the Dark Ages spread its

<sup>1</sup>Darby's Hopes of the Church.

gloomy pall of superstition and heathenism over all the world. But I must be content with offering only a few testimonies as samples of what is said by learned and pious men on this point. Inspired men foresaw and forewarned the church of this apostasy. To the elders of the Ephesian church, Paul said: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."<sup>1</sup> This apostasy from the truth was to begin then, even in the days of the apostles, and from their own disciples. To the Thessalonians, Paul wrote: "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work."<sup>2</sup> Even while the apostles were alive had this delusion begun. Paul warned his brethren not to be deceived by any man, but to "prove all things," and "hold fast that which is good."<sup>3</sup> Yet men now think that the teachings of any professed Christian who lived as early as that, or even two hundred years later, are as good as the Bible, and not to be questioned. Hence, notwithstanding Paul's warning, many have been deceived. Some had been so far deceived by vain philosophy, even in a large and flourishing church which had long enjoyed the watchcare of the apostle, as to deny the resurrection. Hence Paul's inquiry of the Corinthians, "How say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?"<sup>4</sup> This false doctrine all the authority of the apostle was not able to crush, as we have seen; so of other heresies. Of these early corruptions, Mr. Dowling, in his "History of Romanism," thus remarks: "There is scarcely any-

<sup>1</sup>Acts 20: 29, 30.<sup>3</sup>1Thess. 5: 21.<sup>2</sup>2Thess. 2: 7.<sup>4</sup>1Cor. 15: 12.



thing which strikes the mind of the careful student of ancient ecclesiastical history with greater surprise than the comparatively early period at which many of the corruptions of Christianity, which are embodied in the Romish system, took their rise."

Robinson, author of the "History of Baptism," thus writes: "Towards the latter end of the second century, most of the churches assumed a new form, the first simplicity disappeared; and insensibly as the old disciples retired to their graves, their children, along with new converts, both Jews and Gentiles, came forward and modeled the cause."<sup>1</sup> Yes, and this new modeling was done to make it fit their old pagan doctrines. Archibald Bower, in his valuable "History of the Popes," has clearly demonstrated that Catholicism is only paganism with another name. This he repeatedly declares and proves. He says that the Christians of Rome, in the fifth century, who had come over from heathenism, "were yet but half Christians, and had only grafted the Christian religion on the old stock of pagan superstition."<sup>2</sup>

Of the influence of heathen converts upon Christianity, Mr. Bower says: "For those rites and ceremonies, however heathenish, instead of ever being given up by them, were by degrees adopted by the Christian inhabitants of the countries where the new-comers settled. And thus the half Christians, for they were no better, remained half Christians, while the true Christians became half pagans. Thus we may well account for the many errors and corruptions that overspread and dis-

<sup>1</sup>Eccl. Researches, Chap. 6.  
Immortality.

<sup>2</sup>Vol. I, p. 286, Gelasius.

figured the whole face of the church, after the irruption and conversion of the barbarous nations that broke into the empire in the fourth and fifth centuries. Their usages were first connived at, and afterward adopted by the church?"<sup>1</sup>

Can any wonder that pagan doctrines came into the church and supplanted the doctrines of Christ. These nations were those who had been taught by the Druids, who we have seen held to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Did they still retain false ideas about the soul? It would seem that we needed no more proof than the above to convince us that they did. But Mosheim expressly says that they were allowed to still retain their pagan tenets on this point. Hear his words, speaking of the conversion of the heathens at this very time. He says: "*As no one in those times objected to Christians' retaining the opinions of their pagan ancestors respecting the soul, heroes, demons, temples, and the like, and their transferring them into their devotions; and as no one proposed utterly to abolish the ancient pagan institutions, but only to alter them somewhat and purify them, it was unavoidable that the religion and worship of Christians should in this way become corrupted.* This also I will add, that the doctrine of the purification of souls after death by means of some sort of fire, which afterward became so great a source of wealth to the clergy, acquired in this age more development and a more imposing aspect."<sup>2</sup>

This clearly shows the origin of many notions now held by Christians, respecting the immortal soul. Mr. Dowling, in his "History of Roman-

<sup>1</sup>Id. p. 416, Gregory.

<sup>2</sup>Mosh. Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, Cent. 5, Chap. 3, § 2, p. 343.



ism," has brought a great amount of evidence, showing that popery is little more than paganism with another name. "In tracing the origin of the corrupt doctrines and practices of the Romish church," says he, "we have had frequent occasion, in the preceding chapters, to allude to the fact that most of its anti-scriptural rites and ceremonies were adopted from the pagan worship of Greece, Rome, and other heathen nations."<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1729, a distinguished scholar and divine, of the Episcopal church of England, Rev. Dr. Middleton, visited the city of Rome, not as a theologian, but as a classical scholar, to study the ancient classical antiquity of the Greek and Roman pagans. But when he reached Rome, so exact did he find the resemblance between the temples, the images and the ceremonies, of popery and paganism, that he came to the just conclusion that he could in no way so well acquaint himself with ancient paganism, in all its ceremonies of worship, as by studying the Roman Catholic worship. After carefully studying and comparing the two systems of worship, he wrote "a letter from Rome, showing an exact conformity between popery and paganism; or the religion of the present Romans, derived from that of their heathen ancestors."

He has enumerated several points in which paganism and papacy exactly agree. 1. *The burning of incense*.—They practice this in just the same manner as the old heathens. 2. *The use of holy water*.—At the door of every Catholic church is a vessel of holy water, with which every one who enters is sprinkled. Just so it was in all the old heathen temples. 3. *Burning wax can-*

<sup>1</sup>Book 2, Chap. 2.

*dles in the daytime.*—Here again they follow the ancient pagans, as that was their custom. 4. *Votive gifts and offerings.*—These are hung about the altars by those who have made a vow to God in some case of danger. Just so did the old idolaters. This was so rich a thing for the priests that it was soon imitated. 5. *Adoration of idols or images.*—Pagans made images of their dead heroes, and others, and then bowed before them in prayer. So these Roman Christians make images of their martyrs and chief saints, and adore before them. 6. *The gods of the pantheon turned into popish saints.*—The noblest heathen temple now remaining in the world is the *pantheon* in Rome, formerly dedicated by the heathen to *Jove and all the gods*. When the Christians got possession of it, it was re-consecrated to *the Blessed Virgin and all the saints*. With this single alteration, it serves as exactly for all the purposes of Christian (?) worship as it did for the pagan worship for which it was built. In many instances even the old heathen idol was not taken down; but was only re-dressed, re-consecrated, and then worshiped as before, under another name! 7. *Road-gods and saints.*—The pagans had their gods set up by the roadside at convenient distances for travelers to worship. The Catholics have the same. 8. *Processions of worshipers.*—The descriptions of the religious pomps and processions of the heathens were so like those we see on every festival of the Virgin, that none can fail to see their connection.

This comparison, says Dr. Middleton, might be easily carried on through many more instances. But the above are sufficient for my purpose. The learned doctor concludes his letter thus: "I have



sufficiently made good what I undertook to prove; an *exact conformity*, or *uniformity* rather, of *worship*, between popery and paganism; for since, as I have shown above, we *see the present people of Rome* worshiping in the *same temples*, at the *same altars*, sometimes the *same images*, and always with the *same ceremonies*, as the *old Romans*, they must have more charity, as well as skill in distinguishing, than I pretend to have, who can absolve them from the *same superstition* and *idolatry*, of which we condemn their pagan ancestors."<sup>1</sup>

In these facts all Protestants are agreed. They show clearly how terribly Christianity has become corrupted with heathen doctrines before the rise of the Reformation. But Protestants who came out from the papal church at the time of the Reformation did not rid themselves of every false doctrine received by their fathers from the pagans. It was too much to expect that they would cast off all their errors and adopt all the truth. Hence there has been need of a continual reformation ever since, by such men as Wesley, Whitefield, and others. Very many Romish errors were retained, if I mistake not, by the reformers. Dr. Middleton was a member of the established church of England. Hence there is unfortunately too much truth in what Dr. Challoner, a Roman Catholic, says in his reply to Dr. Middleton's letter from Rome. He thus turns Dr. M.'s arguments against himself and the Protestant church of England: "And by the selfsame way of arguing," says Challoner, "by which he pretends to demonstrate an exact conformity between the religion of the present Romans and that of their heathen ances-

<sup>1</sup>P. 280.

tors, these same gentlemen will, with a much fairer show of probability, prove an exact conformity between the religion by law established, and popery. The consequence of which will be, if the doctor be not mistaken in his parallel, that the English Protestantism is no better than heathenish idolatry."<sup>1</sup>

With regard to the doctrine of the immortality of the soul and eternal misery, most of the Protestant churches have retained nearly all the tenets received by the Catholics from the pagans. With a few modifications, the orthodox Protestants still hold the same as the papists in their belief respecting the immortality of the soul. Hence, in proving the heathen origin of this doctrine among the Roman Catholics, we have shown its origin among all Christians.

Let us now compare the pagan and Christian doctrine of the soul:

1. Plato held that the soul is immortal. Christians hold the same. This was not learned from the Bible, for the Scriptures never say a word about the immortality of the soul.

2. Plato held that the soul was of a spiritual or immaterial nature. Christians teach the same. Neither was this learned in the Bible, as it never once mentions such a thing.

3. One of the arguments on which Plato most relied to prove the immortality of the soul, was its spirituality. So it is with Christians. Bible writers are never found using that argument.

4. Plato held the soul to be a part of God. The same is often heard from Christians. Says the Christian poet,

<sup>1</sup>P. 17 of Preface to Catholic Christian Instructed.



“Our souls are his immortal breath.”

The Rev. D. W. Clarke, D. D., now a bishop in the M. E. Church, may be considered a fair exponent of orthodox faith on this subject. In his late popular work, “Man all Immortal,” he uses this language with regard to the soul: “Can we wonder that the undying spirit—that emanation of light and glory from the bosom of the Eternal—should rise above our comprehension?” Once more: “It is the high and indisputable proof of the divinity that dwells within us.”<sup>1</sup> So exactly like the language and sentiments of the ancient heathen philosophers, is the above, that one would readily suppose that he was listening to Plato himself, if he were not informed that this is the language of a *Christian bishop*! As we have seen, this idea that the soul is an emanation from God, a part of divinity, right from the bosom of the Eternal, is the very heart of the pagan doctrine of the soul. Who, then, can fail to see the heathen fountain whence this came? It did not come from the word of God, as nothing of the kind is there taught.

5. Plato, and all the pagans who argued for the soul’s immortality, likewise held to its pre-existence. Many of the early Christians held the same.<sup>2</sup>

6. Plato taught that the soul alone was the real man. So thought Origen, and so teach Christians now. How often we hear ministers of to-day say, as they point to a corpse, “*This* is not your friend. *He* is not dead. He is in Heaven. *This* is only the old tenement in which he lived,—the

<sup>1</sup>Chap. i, p. 18, 20, 23.

<sup>2</sup>Alger’s Doctrine of a Future Life, Part 1, Chap. 1, p. 6.

prison of his now-freed soul." The very original of this may be found in Plato's *Phædo*. Here it is: "Crito having asked him afterward in what manner he wished to be buried; 'As you please,' said Socrates, 'if you can lay hold of me, and I do not escape out of your hands.' At the same time looking upon his friends with a smile, 'I can never persuade Crito,' says he, 'that Socrates is he who converses with you, and disposes the several parts of his discourse; for he always imagines that I am what he is going to see dead in a little while. He confounds *me* with my carcass, and therefore asks me how I would be interred.'"<sup>1</sup>

7. Plato, and all pagans who taught the immortality of the soul, held that the *body* was the *prison* of the soul. Christians believe the same.

8. Plato taught that matter in the gross, and the body in particular, was naturally corrupt, and the origin of all evil. Many Christians teach about the same.

9. This doctrine, when received among the pagans, immediately gave birth to that abominable set of gloomy and misanthropic men, the Eremites and Ascetics. So, as soon as this doctrine of the immortality of the soul was received among Christians, it produced an exactly similar class of men, the Monks, Hermits, Anchorites, etc.

10. Plato and the pagans held that the soul not only does not die with the death of the body, but is actually a gainer in that catastrophe. Here, again, Christians teach exactly the same as those old pagans.

11. Plato in his doctrine had a purgatory prepared, in which to partially purge impure souls

<sup>1</sup>Rollin's *Anct. Hist.*, Vol. I, Book 9, Chap. 4, §6, p, 365.



immediately after death. The Catholics have the same.

12. Plato taught that those who were pure from all sin went immediately to Heaven on the death of the body. Exactly like this, Christians send their righteous saints straight to Heaven at the death of the body. In this they have again faithfully copied Plato.

13. Plato and other heathens sent the incurably wicked straight to hell at death. Here, again, we have the original of the modern doctrine of sending the wicked immediately to hell at death.

14. The pagans deified their dead friends, exalted them into angels, demi-gods, and gods, made images of them, and then prayed to them for assistance. Christians have done the same thing with their saints. The saint and image worship of the Roman Catholics is a fac simile of the old pagan worship of heroes.

15. The pagans taught that little children would go to hell. Thus, Virgil, describing the miseries of the damned, says:

“And now wild shouts, and wailings dire,  
And shrieking *infants* swell the dreadful choir.”<sup>1</sup>

Christians, both Catholic and Protestant, teach the same horrid doctrine. “The condemnation of children dying without having been baptized,” says the Catholic Bossuet, “is an article of firm faith of the church. They are guilty, since they die in the wrath of God, and in the powers of darkness. Children of wrath by nature, objects of hatred and aversion, cast into hell with the

<sup>1</sup>Pitt's Kneid, VI, 385, etc., quoted in Origen and Hist. of End. Pun., p. 77.

other damned.”<sup>1</sup> The Calvinistic doctrine on this point is well known. This tenet is well worthy of its heathen origin.

16. The heathens gave most terrible descriptions of hell, and the woe and torments of the damned there, comparing well with modern orthodox descriptions of hell.

Here are sixteen points of identity between the pagan and Christian doctrine of the immortality of the soul, which embraces the whole doctrine in about all its phases. This, with the historical evidence already presented, makes it quite certain where this doctrine originated, and how it came among Christians.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### THE NATURE AND DESTINY OF MAN AS TAUGHT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT.

HAVING previously found the origin and history of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul prior to its reception into the church, we will now call attention to those who have not believed this pagan sentiment. We will now briefly notice the faith of the ancient Jews, as found in the Old-Testament writings. But my space will allow me to devote but a few pages to this branch of the subject; hence, I can but state a few important facts, and then refer the reader to other works on this point.

Many learned men who believe in the immortal-

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by the same.



ity of the soul, have frankly confessed that nothing is said on this subject in the Bible. Olshausen, in his *Comments on 1 Cor. 15:13*, says: "The doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and the name, are alike unknown to the entire Bible." This is a good confession; and here is another of the same kind: Bishop Tillotson, in his *Sermons of 1774, Vol. II*, says: "The immortality of the soul is rather supposed, or taken for granted, than expressly revealed in the Bible." This is virtually admitting the whole question. Dr. Bagnall, in the *Methodist Quarterly Review* for April, 1852, while advocating the natural immortality of man, makes this confession: "In the Bible, we think, there is no passage which can be strictly said to declare that all human souls are immortal. The celebrated Richard Watson corroborates this statement thus: "That the soul is naturally immortal, . . . is contradicted by the Scripture, which makes our immortality a gift dependent on the will of the giver."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Alger, in his late popular book, says: "The whole tenor and drift of the representations in the Old Testament show that the state of disembodied souls is deep quietude. Freed from bondage, pain, toil, and care, they repose in silence."<sup>2</sup>

Archbishop Whately, in his "Revelation of a Future State," says: "To the Christian, indeed, all this doubt would be instantly removed, if he found that *the immortality of the soul, as a disembodied spirit*, were revealed in the word of God." . . . In fact, however, no such doctrine is revealed to us; the Christian's hope, as founded on the promises contained in the gospel, is the resurrec-

<sup>1</sup>Theol. Inst., Vol. II, Part 2, Chap. xviii, p. 83.

<sup>2</sup>Doctrine of a Future Life, Chap. vii, p. 153.

tion of the body."<sup>1</sup> Bishop Lowth, in his "Lectures on Hebrew Poetry," p. 78, says: "We there find no exact account, no explicit mention, of immortal spirits."<sup>2</sup> This is a significant confession, since the bishop was a firm believer in the soul's immortality. Dr. Neander says: "It was an old Jewish notion that immortality was not founded upon the nature of the soul, but a peculiar gift of divine grace."<sup>3</sup> Here is another good admission from an orthodox writer: "We would express our conviction that the idea of the immortality of the soul *has no source in the gospel*; that it comes, *on the contrary, from the Platonists*."<sup>4</sup> Says Gibbon: "We discover that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is omitted in the law of Moses."<sup>5</sup> Milman thus admits the same: "Modern writers have accounted in various ways for the silence of the Hebrew legislator on the immortality of the soul."<sup>6</sup>

Nemesius, bishop of Emesa, in the fifth century, thus states the doctrine of the Jews: "The Hebrews say that originally man was made evidently neither mortal nor immortal; but on the confines of either nature; so that, if he should yield to the bodily affections, he should share also the changes of the body; but if he should prefer the nobler affections of the soul, he should be deemed worthy of immortality."<sup>7</sup> This plainly shows the faith of the ancient Hebrews, as well as the doctrine of the Bible on this point.

So manifestly true are the foregoing statements, that many pious and learned Christian men who

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by Horne, in the Watch Tower, p. 8.      <sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>3</sup>Church Hist., p. 444.      <sup>4</sup>Darby's Hopes of the Church.

<sup>5</sup>Decline and Fall, Vol. I, Chap. 15, p. 530.      <sup>6</sup>Ibid., note.

<sup>7</sup>De Natura Hominis, Chap. i. Quoted by Hudson, Debt and Grace, p. 310.



have carefully examined the Bible upon this subject, have become thoroughly satisfied that it does not teach the immortality of the soul. Hence they have written many books abundantly showing that no such doctrine is anywhere taught in the Bible, but the reverse. A few points we will here notice.

The terms, "immortal soul," "immortality of the soul," "never-dying soul," "deathless spirit," "disembodied spirit," "spirit land," "eternal misery," and the like, which are so often used in modern theology, are not anywhere found in the Bible, nor anything equivalent to them. This fact alone ought to open our eyes on this subject.

In Gen. 2:7, we have a statement of man's creation, and the component parts of man: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Two elements, and only two, enter into man's composition: 1. *The dust of the earth.* Mark: that which was made of the dust of the earth, was the man: "God formed man of the dust of the ground." 2. *The breath of life.* This was breathed into his nostrils—the same breath we now breathe—the vital air. 3. Thus organized, man BECAME a *living soul*. He did not have an immortal soul, nor even a living soul, put into him; but he became a living soul, that is, a living creature. But there is not one word about an immortal soul.

The word *soul* in the Old Testament is translated, except once, from the Hebrew word *nephesh*, which occurs 745 times, and is translated *soul* about 473 times. It is also rendered *life, living, person, mind, heart, body, and dead body, will, appetite, lust, thing, beast, fish, creature, etc.*

From this it may readily be seen that the word *nephesh* [soul] is far from meaning an immortal, immaterial ghost in man.

Parkhurst (author of a Greek and a Hebrew Lexicon) says: "As a noun, *nephesh* hath been supposed to signify the spiritual part of man, or what we commonly call his soul. I must, for my part, confess that I can find no passage where it hath undoubtedly this meaning."

The original Scriptures often speak of souls as being in danger of *dying*, and as being *killed*. Eze. 18:4: "The soul that sinneth, it shall *die*." But an immortal soul cannot die; hence, the soul is not immortal. Josh. 11:11: "And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them; there was not any left to breathe." See also chap. 10:28-39. Here souls were slain, utterly destroyed, by the sword. These were not immortal souls, certainly! Num. 35:2: Ye shall appoint cities, "that the slayer may flee thither, which killeth any *nephesh* [soul] at unawares." Verse 15: "That every one that killeth any *nephesh* [soul] unawares may flee thither." 1 Sam. 22:22: "I have occasioned the death of all the [*nephesh*] souls of thy father's house." Hence, also, dead souls are spoken of. 2 Chron. 20:24: "Behold, they were [*meth nephesh*] *dead souls*, fallen to the earth." Verse 25: "They found among them in abundance both riches with the *meth nephesh* [dead souls], and precious jewels." Hence, also, the soul is spoken of as going into the grave, and being redeemed from it. Ps. 49:15: "God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave." Ps. 89:48: "What man is he that liveth, and shall not see death? shall he deliver his soul from the hand of the



grave?" That is, just as surely as every man must die, so surely must his soul go into the grave. When God spared Hezekiah's life, and added fifteen years to his days, Hezekiah said: "Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption." See Isa. 38:17. This clearly teaches that his soul would have gone to the pit of corruption if he had died. Then the soul can be killed, be dead, and go into the grave. This is what the Old Testament says of it.

The word spirit, in the Old Testament, comes from two Hebrew words, *n'shah-mah* and *roo-agh*. *N'shah-mah* occurs 24 times, and is translated *breath, blast, spirit, soul, inspiration*. Gesenius defines it thus; "1. Breath, spirit, spoken of the breath of God, i. e., a) the wind; b) the breath, breathing of his anger. 2. Breath, life, of man and beasts. 3. The mind, intellect. 4. Concr. living thing, animal."

*Roo-agh* occurs 442 times, and is translated *spirit, wind*, 97 times, *breath*, 28 times, *smell, mind, blast, tempest, air*, etc. It never, in a single instance, means a deathless spirit, or any thing that lives and has thought and intelligence separate from the body. It is the principle in the vital air which gives life to all animals.

We now call attention to the death of Adam. Gen. 2:17. God tells him not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, saying: "for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die;" margin, "dying thou shalt die." I can not give a better exposition of this than in the words of Dr. Adam Clarke on this verse: "Thou shalt surely die: *moth tamuth*, literally, *a death thou shalt die*; or, *dying thou shalt die*. From that moment thou shalt become mortal, and shall

continue in a *dying state* till thou *die*. This we find literally accomplished; every moment of his life, man may be considered as dying, till soul and body are separated. Other meanings have been given of this passage, but they are in general either fanciful or incorrect."

This I believe expresses the correct idea of the text. What follows confirms this. Gen. 3:1-6, relates how Adam did just what God told him not to do—ate of the fruit. Verses 17-19: God tells Adam that because he has eaten of the tree of which he told him not to eat, the ground is cursed, thorns and thistles shall it produce to him, and "in the sweat of thy face," says the Lord, "shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." This shows what God meant by saying that Adam should *die*, i. e., he shall go back to dust. To accomplish this, God shut him away from the tree of life. Verses 22-24. The consequence was that Adam did die. Gen. 5:5. In all this there is not one word about an immortal soul. The whole man goes back to dust.

The Old Testament everywhere teaches that death puts an end to all life, thought, and intelligence, and reduces man to a state of unconscious slumber till the resurrection shall awake them. Take a few examples of Bible obituaries: 1 Kings 2:10: "So David slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David." David *himself* was buried, and he *slept* in his grave. So of Solomon: "And Solomon slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David his father." 1 Kings 11:43. This is said of the whole rational man. No part is excepted. Job 3:11-19: Job here



says, if he could have died in earliest infancy, "Now should I have lain still, and been quiet; I should have slept: then had I been at rest. . . . There the wicked cease from troubling; and there the weary be at rest. . . . The small and the great are there." Chap. 10:21, 22: Speaking of death, Job says: "Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness and the shadow of death; a land of darkness, as darkness itself; and of the shadow of death, without any order, and where the light is as darkness." This is where righteous Job was going. Is it a description of Heaven? Far from it. It is the silent chambers of the dead. In chap. 14:10-12, Job asks the question, "But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" A very important question, indeed, and just what we want to know. Hear the venerable patriarch's answer: "As the waters fail from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep." Nothing could be plainer, showing that man sleeps till the resurrection.

David's testimony is in harmony with Job's. Ps. 6:5: "For in death there is no remembrance of thee; in the grave, who shall give thee thanks?" Ps. 88:10: "Wilt thou show wonders to the dead? shall the dead arise and praise thee?" Ps. 115:17: "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence." These statements are so plain and positive that they need no comment. Ps. 146:3, 4: "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help. His breath goeth forth, he returneth

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to his earth ; in that very day his thoughts perish." Death, then, puts an end to a man's thoughts, and, of course, his consciousness. Can a man be in Heaven or hell without thoughts ?

Solomon agrees with his father David. Eccl. 9 : 5, 6, 10 : "For the living know that they shall die ; *but the dead know not anything*, neither have they any more a reward ; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their *love*, and their *hatred*, and their *envy*, is now *perished*." "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might ; for there is no *work*, nor *device*, nor *knowledge*, nor *wisdom*, in the *grave whither thou goest*." Nothing could be plainer.

Hezekiah's testimony is in the same strain. He had been very sick, but the Lord had spared his life and added fifteen years to his days. For this he thanks God, and gives his reason for it : "For the *grave cannot praise thee ; death cannot celebrate thee ;* they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth." Isa. 38 : 18. He knew that death destroyed all man's consciousness. Daniel says : "And many of them that *sleep* in the *dust* of the earth, shall awake." Chap. 12 : 2. Here, again, men are asleep in the dust.

We now offer the testimony of learned men with regard to the faith of the ancient Jews and the teachings of the Old Testament on this point. Mr. Alger, in his "Critical History of the Doctrine of a Future Life," a very able work indeed, uses this language : "The term *rephaim* is used to denote the *names* of the departed. The etymology of the word, as well as its use, makes it mean the weak, the relaxed. 'I am counted as them that go down into the under world ; I am as a man that hath no strength.' This faint, power-



less condition accords with the idea that they were destitute of flesh, blood, and animal life,—mere *umbræ*. These ghosts are described as being nearly as destitute of sensation as they are of strength. They are called ‘the inhabitants of the land of stillness.’ They exist in an inactive, partially torpid state, with a dreamy consciousness of past and present, neither suffering or enjoying, and seldom moving. Herder says of the Hebrews: ‘The sad and mournful images of their ghostly realm disturbed them, and were too much for their self-possession.’ Respecting these images, he adds: ‘Their voluntary force and energy were destroyed. They were feeble as a shade, without distinction of members, as a nerveless breath. They wandered and flitted in the dark nether world.’ This ‘wandering and flitting,’ however, is rather the spirit of Herder’s poetry than that of the Hebrews; for the whole tenor and drift of their representations in the Old Testament show that the state of disembodied souls is deep quietude. Freed from bondage, pain, toil, and care, they repose in silence. The ghost summoned from beneath by the witch of Endor, said, ‘Why hast thou disquieted me to bring me up?’ It was, indeed, in a dismal abode that they took their long quiet; but then it was in a place ‘where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.’”<sup>1</sup>

A careful examination of the Old Testament will show that these statements are correct. Hence the Jews had no idea that the souls of the dead were in Heaven, or that they were alive and intelligent.

“The native Hebrew conception of the state of

<sup>1</sup>Chap. viii, pp. 153, 154.

the dead was that of the voiceless gloom and dismal slumber of sheol, whither all alike went."<sup>1</sup>

Nevins, in his "Biblical Antiquities," thus describes the faith of the ancient people of God with regard to the state of the dead; "HADES: It became common," says he, "especially in the language of poetry, to employ the image of a sepulcher in representation of the general condition of the dead. A vast cavern was conceived, stretching abroad with immense extent, in the deepest parts of the earth. Continual gloom hung over all its scenery, and the most profound silence reigned on every side. No step of living man had ever descended to its unknown depth; nor had the eye of such ever discovered one of its secrets. It was all wrapped in awful mystery; it was *the land of silence*; it was the *region and shadow of death*."<sup>2</sup> Such was the idea that the Jews had of the dead in Old-Testament times.

These reliable testimonies fully confirm our position with regard to the condition of the dead as taught in the Old Testament.

A few words now with regard to the punishment of the wicked. If the awful doctrine of eternal misery were true, it ought to have been revealed in the clearest and most unmistakable terms in the very opening pages of God's book. But instead of this, the Old Testament is not only silent as to such a doctrine, but most unequivocally teaches the utter destruction of the wicked.

1. *It teaches that they shall die.* "He that hateth reproof shall *die*."<sup>3</sup> "He that despiseth his ways shall *die*."<sup>4</sup> "Every one shall *die* for his own iniquity."<sup>5</sup> "Behold, all souls are mine;

<sup>1</sup> Doctrine of a Future Life, Part 3, Chap. iii, p. 361.

<sup>2</sup> Chap. vii, §2, p. 154. <sup>3</sup> Prov. 15: 10. <sup>4</sup> Prov. 19: 16. <sup>5</sup> Jer. 31: 30.



as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine; the *soul* that sinneth, it shall die.”<sup>1</sup> “*Die*: To cease to live; to expire; to de cease; to perish.”—*Webster*. This is the doom of the wicked. Does *die* mean to *live* eternally in hell fire? The *soul* shall die. Then it is not immortal, for that which is immortal cannot die.

2. *They shall be destroyed*. “Thou shalt *destroy* them that speak leasing.”<sup>2</sup> “But the transgressors shall be destroyed together: the end of the wicked shall be cut off.”<sup>3</sup> “When the wicked spring as the grass, and when all the workers of iniquity do flourish; it is that they shall be destroyed forever.”<sup>4</sup> “Whoso despiseth the word shall be destroyed.”<sup>5</sup> “The destruction of the transgressors and of the sinners shall be together, and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed.”<sup>6</sup> “*Destroy*: To kill; to slay; to extirpate; applied to men, etc. In general, to put an end to; to annihilate a thing, or the form in which it exists.”—*Webster*. When a thing is destroyed, it ceases to exist. Many times it is declared that the wicked shall be *destroyed*. Would God repeatedly use such terms in announcing the punishment of sinners, if he meant to preserve them alive eternally in torment?

3. *The wicked shall perish*. “Yet he [the sinner] shall perish forever like his own dung.”<sup>7</sup> “But the wicked shall perish [how?], and the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away.”<sup>8</sup> This language is unmistakable. They are to perish by being consumed into smoke

<sup>1</sup>Eze. 18 : 4.<sup>4</sup>Ps. 92 : 7.<sup>7</sup>Job 20 : 7.<sup>2</sup>Ps. 5 : 6.<sup>5</sup>Prov. 13 : 13.<sup>3</sup>Ps. 37 : 38.<sup>6</sup>Isa. 1 : 28.<sup>8</sup>Ps. 37 : 20.

like fat when it is burned. "He that speaketh lies shall perish."<sup>1</sup> "A false witness shall perish."<sup>2</sup> Says Isaiah, "Behold, all they that were incensed against thee shall be ashamed and confounded; they shall be as nothing; and they that strive with thee shall perish."<sup>3</sup> Here their perishing brings them to nothing. "*Perish*: To die; to lose life in any manner; to wither and decay." — *Webster*. This is the end of sinners.

4. *Shall be consumed*. Says David, "Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth, and let the wicked be no more."<sup>4</sup> When they are consumed, then they are no more, *i. e.*, do not exist.

5. *They shall be burned in fire*. "They shall be devoured as stubble fully dry."<sup>5</sup> "For, behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. . . . And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet."<sup>6</sup> Thus we see that sinners will be burned up wholly, root and branch, and reduced to ashes.

6. *They shall be put out of existence*. "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be."<sup>7</sup> "*To be*: To exist." — *Webster*. Then the time is coming when the wicked shall not exist. Obadiah says that the heathen, when they are punished, "*shall be as though they had not been*."<sup>8</sup> Did they live before they existed? No; neither will they after they are destroyed.

<sup>1</sup>Prov. 19:9.<sup>4</sup>Ps. 104:35.<sup>7</sup>Ps. 37:10.<sup>2</sup>Prov. 21:28.<sup>5</sup>Nahum 1:10.<sup>3</sup>Chap. 41:11.<sup>6</sup>Mal. 4:1-3.<sup>8</sup>Obad., Verse 16.



Many other words are used by the Lord denoting the utter ruin and extermination of all the wicked. This is said of the soul, as well as of the body. Hence, men are not immortal according to the teachings of the Old Testament.

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## CHAPTER X.

### EXAMINATION OF THE APOCRYPHAL OLD TESTAMENT.

WE now come to the Apocrypha. This is not claimed as inspired testimony. It was written by the Jews later than the books of the Old Testament, and yet before the New Testament was written; hence it comes in between the two, and shows the faith of the Jews at that time on the subject before us. It is in perfect harmony with the teachings of the Old Testament already examined. If possible, it states even more plainly the mortality of man, the sleep of the dead, the utter destruction of the wicked, etc. We will quote a few texts as samples of its teachings. "Now, therefore, why disquietest thou thyself, seeing thou art but a *corruptible* man? and why art thou moved, whereas thou art but *mortal*?"<sup>1</sup> Man, then, according to this testimony, is corruptible and mortal. "But the day of doom shall be the end of this time, and the beginning of the immortality for to come, wherein corruption is past."<sup>2</sup> Then immortality will be given at the last day; therefore we

<sup>1</sup>2 Esdras 7:15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Verse 43.

do not have it now. Again, we read this plain declaration: "For God created man to be immortal, and made him to be an image of his own eternity. Nevertheless through envy of the devil came death into the world; and they that do hold of his side do find it."<sup>1</sup> Man was made *to be* immortal; but he sinned, fell, and died, and hence did not obtain the immortality designed for him. Again, the saints die, "yet is their *hope* full of immortality."<sup>2</sup> What we hope for, we have not already. "By means of her [wisdom] I *shall obtain* immortality."<sup>3</sup> Does not possess it now, then! "To know thy [God's] power is the root of immortality."<sup>4</sup> Of the makers of idols, he says: "For being *mortal*, he worketh a dead thing with wicked hands."<sup>5</sup> "I myself also am a mortal man, like to all, and the offspring of him that was first made of the earth."<sup>6</sup> But the following declaration settles the question as to man's nature: "For all things cannot be in men, *because the son of man is NOT IMMORTAL*."<sup>7</sup> This shows that man's immortality was not believed by the Jews in those days.

All the writers of the Apocrypha teach unmistakably the sleep of the dead—that at death man goes into the grave and remains there in an unconscious condition till the resurrection. "Remember thy children that *sleep*, for I shall bring them out of the sides of the earth, and show mercy unto them."<sup>8</sup> Souls are in the grave. "In the grave, the chambers of souls are like the womb of a woman."<sup>9</sup> "And the earth shall restore

<sup>1</sup>Wisdom of Solomon 2 : 23, 24.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Chap. 3 : 4.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Chap. 8 : 13.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., Chap. 15 : 3.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., Chap. 15 : 17.

<sup>6</sup>Wisdom of Solomon 7 : 1.

<sup>7</sup>Ecc. 17 : 30.

<sup>8</sup>2 Esdras 2 : 31.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., Chap. 4 : 41.



those that are *asleep* in her, and so shall the dust those that dwell in *silence*, and the secret places shall *deliver those souls* that were committed unto them.”<sup>1</sup> Thus, instead of the soul’s going to Heaven, it goes into the grave and dwells in silence. With this fact harmonizes the following: “Who shall praise the Most High in the grave, instead of them which live and give thanks? Thanksgiving perisheth from the dead, *as from one that is not.*”<sup>2</sup> Then the dead are not alive in Heaven praising God. In 2 Maccabees 7, is related the case of a mother and her seven sons who were martyred in a most cruel manner. They all expressed their faith in God, and hope of a future life by a resurrection; but not one word about the immortal soul, or going to Heaven at death. They based all their hopes upon the resurrection.

The punishment of the wicked is very plainly stated.

1. *They shall perish.* “In their unrighteousness also they shall perish.”<sup>3</sup> “The ungodly should perish.”<sup>4</sup> “Let the multitude perish, then, which was born in vain.”<sup>5</sup> “Make no tarrying to return to the Lord, and put not off from day to day; for suddenly shall the wrath of the Lord come forth, and in thy security thou shalt be destroyed, and perish in the day of vengeance.”<sup>6</sup>

2. *They shall be destroyed.* “For the Lord knoweth all them that sin against him, and therefore delivereth he them unto *death* and destruction.”<sup>7</sup> “The congregation of the wicked is like tow wrapped together; and the end of them is a flame of fire to destroy them.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., Chap. 7 : 32.

<sup>42</sup> Esdras 7 : 17.

<sup>72</sup> Esdras 15 : 26.

<sup>2</sup>Eccl. 17 : 27, 28.

<sup>52</sup> Esdras 9 : 22.

<sup>8</sup>Eccl. 21 : 9.

<sup>31</sup> Esdras 4 : 37.

<sup>6</sup>Eccl. 5 : 7.

3 "*The wicked will be consumed like straw.*"<sup>1</sup>

4. *They shall die.* "Because that alms do deliver from death."<sup>2</sup> The wicked "shall hereafter be a vile carcass, and a reproach among the dead forevermore."<sup>3</sup> Souls can be slain; hence, all are not immortal.<sup>4</sup> The doctrine of eternal misery and suffering is directly denied and contradicted. "And the Most High shall appear upon the seat of judgment, and misery shall pass away, and the long-suffering shall have an end."<sup>5</sup>

Thus, then, we have the clearest evidence that the Jews did not believe in the immortality of the soul, the conscious state of the dead, nor eternal misery; for the above quotations can never be harmonized with that doctrine.

#### JOSEPHUS' TESTIMONY CONSIDERED.

To the foregoing facts it is objected that Josephus says that two sects of the Jews, the Pharisees and the Essenes, did believe the immortality of the soul. To this we answer, 1. This rests alone upon his assertion. No other ancient author can be brought to support him. Perhaps a passage in Tacitus may be construed as agreeing with Josephus; yet even this is quite susceptible of another meaning. It is supposed by some learned men that Tacitus drew his history of the Jews from Josephus; if so, of course he would follow him. Hence it stands alone upon Josephus' authority. 2. We have seen by the Old Testament and the Apocrypha that the Jews did not believe the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Hence, Josephus directly contradicts them. Which

<sup>1</sup>2 Esdras 15: 23.    <sup>2</sup>Tobit 4: 10.    <sup>3</sup>Wisdom of Solomon 4: 18.

<sup>4</sup>Ecc. 21: 2.

<sup>5</sup>2 Esdras 7: 33.



is the more reliable? 3. Josephus wrote his books after the destruction of Jerusalem and the Jewish nation. He wrote them among the Romans, and for the Romans to read; hence there was a temptation for him to bend and color Jewish doctrines to suit his heathen conquerors. There is but too much proof that he did this in many points. 4. Josephus is not a reliable author. Here are a few testimonies from eminent men. Says the "New American Cyclopaedia": "Pride in the ancient glories of his nation, awe of the greatness and power of Rome, personal vanity, and a tendency to unbounded flattery of the Flavian family, appear with equal prominence in his writings."<sup>1</sup> This criticism is none too severe on him. The learned Dr. Knapp, in his "Christian Theology," says: "The doctrine of the resurrection of the body was therefore common among the Jews at the time of Christ and the apostles. Vide Matt. 22; Luke 20; Acts 23: 6-8. So, in John 11: 24, the Jewess Martha speaks of the resurrection of the dead as a thing well known and common. Josephus indeed (Antiq. 18: 2,) expresses himself doubtfully with regard to the Pharisees: 'They believe that the soul is immortal, and can easily return to life (*anabiosai*);' and again (Bell. Jud. II, 7), 'They maintain that the souls of the pious pass into other bodies (*metabaineni eis eteron soma*).' Here Josephus, in his usual manner, so designedly represents the Jewish doctrine, that the Greeks and Romans, to whom the resurrection of the body appeared absurd, should suppose the transmigration of souls to be intended, while at the same time, the Jews should understand that the resurrection of the dead was spoken of."

<sup>1</sup>Art. Josephus.

Again: "Josephus carefully avoids the words *anastasis* and *anistemi*, when he describes the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and expresses himself ambiguously, in order not to displease the Greeks and Romans, for whom he principally wrote, and to whom the doctrine of the resurrection of the body would appear, not only new, but, according to the principles of the philosophy prevailing among them, offensive and absurd."<sup>1</sup>

By this we see that there was a strong temptation for Josephus to dissemble and prevaricate on the subject before us. That he did do this, is proved clearly. How much confidence can we place in the testimony of such a man? Mosheim says that Josephus "is very inconsistent with himself in the account which he gives of them [the Pharisees], as may easily be perceived by any one who will compare together the different passages relating to them in his works. It would also prove a task of some difficulty to reconcile everything which he says concerning the opinions of the Pharisees, with what is recorded of them in the writings of the New Testament."<sup>2</sup> He tries to reconcile it by supposing that the Pharisees were not fixed and settled in their opinions. But evidently the real fact is, Josephus was trying to cover up the truth.

Dr. Jorton also remarks: "In his antiquities, Josephus takes too great liberties with the sacred history, and accommodates it too much to the taste of the Gentiles, which yet probably he did to recommend his oppressed and unhappy nation to the favor of the Greeks and Romans." "May it not have been the time-serving policy which

<sup>1</sup>Pp. 530, 531.

<sup>2</sup>Commentaries, Vol. I, Chap. ii, § 11, Note 2, p. 64.



suggested the flattery which he addressed to Vespasian, as before related, and even induced him, in spite of his accurate knowledge of the Scriptures, to represent his patron, though a heathen and a stranger, as the promised Messiah!"<sup>1</sup> A man who will so grossly pervert God's word, is not to be relied upon. Dr. A. Clarke, in giving Josephus' account of the Pharisees' doctrine of the soul, says: "But it is very likely that Josephus has not told the *whole truth* here!"<sup>2</sup> The great Bochart, referring to Josephus' "Wars of the Jews," Book 6, Chap. x, Sec. 1, says: "There are in this clause of Josephus as many mistakes as words."<sup>3</sup> Dean Prideaux thus observes: "Sacred writ, as being dictated by the Holy Spirit of God, must ever be of infallible truth, which cannot be said of the writings of Josephus. For they have in them many great and manifest mistakes. . . For therein he frequently varies from Scripture, history, and common sense."<sup>4</sup> Another writer observes: "It must be owned that in his account of the Scripture times, he has taken a bold liberty to vary from the Bible, to add, alter, retrench, and even sometimes contradict it."<sup>5</sup> Pococke remarks: "If we have not cited Josephus, it is no wonder; since, in giving the views of the sects he names respecting the other world, he seems to have used words better suited to the fashions and the ears of the Greeks and Romans, than such as a scholar of the Jewish law would understand, or deem expressive of his meaning."<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Remarks on Eccl. Hist., Vol. I, p. 21, and Note.

<sup>2</sup>Comments on John 9:2.

<sup>3</sup>Whiston's Josephus, p. 761.

<sup>4</sup>Connection of Old and New Test., Vol. I, Part 1, Book 5, p. 302.

<sup>5</sup>Quoted in Prof. Hudson's Future Life, p. 335.

<sup>6</sup>Quoted by same, p. 335.

Numerous testimonies to the same effect might be given, but our limits will not allow them. Every careful reader of Josephus must see that these testimonies are true. Hence, little or no confidence can be placed in him on such a subject as the one before us. The "Discourse Concerning Hades," found in his works, it should be remarked, is unquestionably spurious. Kitto, in his "Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature," says: "Josephus himself, in the discourse ascribed to him on Hades, speaks of a subterraneous region, a lake of unquenchable fire, everlasting punishment, and of a worm never dying (Secs. 2, 6); but that homily, as Whiston calls it, abounds with other evidence that its author was a Christian." Alger says: "The fragment entitled, 'Concerning Hades,' formerly attributed to Josephus, is now acknowledged on all sides to be a gross forgery."<sup>1</sup>

It is a well-settled fact, then, that the writings of Josephus are not to be implicitly relied upon as giving a correct account of Jewish belief, especially when it was for his interest to dissemble to please the Romans, as it very manifestly was on the question of the nature of the soul. We must therefore return to the sure word of God, to find what was the faith of God's people at that time.

<sup>1</sup>Future Life, Part 1, Chap. viii, p. 163.



## CHAPTER XI.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT.

NEED I inform the reader that the New Testament is entirely silent with regard to the immortality of the soul, eternal misery, conscious state of the dead, and the like? In vain we look there for any of these doctrines. When the dead are spoken of, they are represented as being *asleep*, and in the grave. Thus: "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the *saints which slept* arose."<sup>1</sup> "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, *fell on sleep*, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption."<sup>2</sup> "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."<sup>3</sup> These are too plain to need comment.

The resurrection is held out as the great and only hope of a future life. Says Paul, "If the dead rise not, let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die."<sup>4</sup> He does not say, "If the soul is not immortal;" but, "If the dead *rise not*." Again, he says: "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished."<sup>5</sup> Again, he says he had sacrificed everything, that "if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."<sup>6</sup> In perfect har-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 27 : 52.<sup>2</sup> Acts 13 : 36.<sup>3</sup> 1 Thess. 4 : 13, 14.<sup>4</sup> 1 Cor. 15 : 32.<sup>5</sup> 1 Cor. 15 : 17, 18.<sup>6</sup> Phil. 3 : 11.

mony with this, Jesus said: "And this is the will of Him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."<sup>1</sup> All, then, hangs upon the resurrection of the dead.

As to the punishment of the wicked, the New Testament is very plain. It repeatedly declares that they shall *die, perish, be destroyed, be consumed, be burned up*, etc. I will give a few examples:

"The wages of sin is *death*."<sup>2</sup> "For if ye live after the flesh, ye *shall die*."<sup>3</sup> "To *die*, does not mean to live eternally. Of a certain class, Peter says: But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and *destroyed*, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall *utterly perish in their own corruption*."<sup>4</sup> If words have any meaning, this language teaches the utter destruction of the wicked. It is declared that they shall be burned up like chaff,<sup>5</sup> like dried limbs,<sup>6</sup> like hay, wood, and stubble,<sup>7</sup> and like thorns.<sup>8</sup> Did the inspired writer mean to teach eternal torment in hell fire by such figures as these? It would be a violation of all language to suppose it.

The word "immortal" occurs only once in the New Testament, and is there applied to God.<sup>9</sup> The word "immortality" occurs five times. 1. It is said that God only has immortality.<sup>10</sup> 2. It is brought to light through the gospel.<sup>11</sup> 3. We are exhorted to seek for it.<sup>12</sup> 4 and 5. It is to be given to the saints only, at the resurrection.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John 6: 40.<sup>2</sup> Rom. 6: 23.<sup>3</sup> Rom. 8: 13.<sup>4</sup> 2 Pet. 2: 12.<sup>5</sup> Matt. 3: 12.<sup>6</sup> John 15: 6.<sup>7</sup> 1 Cor. 3: 12-15.<sup>8</sup> Heb. 6: 8.<sup>9</sup> 1 Tim. 1: 17.<sup>10</sup> 1 Tim. 6: 16.<sup>11</sup> 2 Tim. 1: 10.<sup>12</sup> Rom. 2: 6, 7.<sup>13</sup> 1 Cor. 15: 51-54.



Peter teaches that this world will, at the Judgment, be burned and purified by fire; and that the wicked will be burned up by this fire.<sup>1</sup> Then the earth will be restored to its original purity, and given to the saints. This leaves no chance for eternal misery. Jesus says that the wicked "shall go away into everlasting punishment; but the righteous, into life eternal."<sup>2</sup> This text is thought by some to teach eternal, conscious suffering of the wicked; but it is far from it. Notice: Sinners are to have exactly the opposite of what the righteous have. The righteous have eternal life. What is the opposite of life? Death, of course; and as the life of the righteous is eternal, so the death of the sinner will be eternal. He will die, never to live again. Certainly, death is a punishment; then eternal death would be an eternal punishment. Paul makes this conclusion certain when he says that the wicked "shall be punished with everlasting destruction."<sup>3</sup> Here he plainly tells us what that everlasting punishment will be; viz., destruction.

For further remarks on the Bible, I must refer the reader to our works, published by the Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, wholly devoted to that part of the subject.

<sup>1</sup> 2 Pet. 3.  
Immortality.

<sup>2</sup> Matt. 25:46.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Thess. 1:9.

## CHAPTER XII.

TEACHING OF THE APOSTOLIC FATHERS\* CONCERN-  
ING THE NATURE OF MAN.

SAYS Archbishop Wake, the epistles in the Apocryphal New Testament are a full and perfect collection of "all the genuine writings that remain to us of the apostolic Fathers, and carry on the antiquity of the church from the time of the holy Scriptures of the New Testament to about a hundred and fifty years after Christ. Except the holy Scriptures, there is nothing remaining of the truly genuine Christian antiquity more early. They contain all that can with any certainty be depended upon of the most primitive Fathers."<sup>1</sup>

Then let us examine these writings, and see if, as late as one hundred and fifty years after Christ, the immortality of the soul, or eternal misery, was taught by any of the Christians. The first writer is BARNABAS, A. D. 71. We will lay before the reader every passage of his that relates to our subject. In Chap. 1:7, he says: "There are, therefore, three things ordained by the Lord; the hope of life, the beginning and the completion of it." Chap. 3:15: "Take heed, therefore, lest sitting still, now that we are called, we fall asleep

\*It is the opinion of the most eminent critics that the testimony of the so-called Christian Fathers is not entitled to much credit, as they often, on the most important subjects, in the language of Dr. Clarke, "blow both hot and cold." In the present work, the reader must take their testimony for what it is worth. It is, however, quite apparent that the doctrine of the soul's immortality, etc., is not advocated in the writings of the Fathers; and this is the only object of presenting their testimony in these pages.

<sup>1</sup> Preface to Abp. Wake's Apos. Fathers, p. 15.



in our sins." He speaks of death as falling asleep. In chap. 4:6, he says the wicked "man will justly perish." Chap. 5:1: "The moth shall eat you up." Chap. 9:6, speaks of those who are altogether wicked and adjudged to death." Chap. 10:8: The wicked "are as the dust which the wind scattereth away from the face of the earth." Chap. 14:6, 17: "Thou shalt not cleave to those that walk in the way of death." "The mouth is the snare of death." Chap. 15:1, 8, 10: "But the way of darkness is crooked and full of cursing. For it is the way of eternal death, with punishment; in which they that walk meet those things that destroy their own souls." Here he says eternal *death*, not eternal *misery*. "But he that chooses the other part, shall be destroyed together with his works. For this cause there shall be both a resurrection and a retribution." "For the day is at hand in which all things shall be destroyed, together with the wicked one. The Lord is near, and his reward is with him."

This is a good witness, showing the faith of the church at that time. He represents that the wicked shall *die, perish, be destroyed, be blown away as dust, and eaten as a moth*; that souls will be destroyed; and he speaks of the sleep of the dead, the coming of the Lord, the resurrection, and retribution thereafter.

The next writer is CLEMENT, A. D. 91-100, in his two letters to the Corinthians. He was a disciple of Peter, and bishop of Rome. In 1 Cor. 5:1, he says: Let us lay "aside all vanity, and contention, and envy which leads unto *death*." Chap. 7:10: "The transgressors shall perish from off the face of it [the earth]." Chap. 17:1, 2: "How blessed and wonderful, beloved, are the

gifts of God! Life in immortality!" Verse 18: "By him would God have us to taste the knowledge of immortality." Chap. 18:2: "What can a mortal man do?" These quotations show that man is mortal, and that immortality is the gift of God by Christ. Again he says that the saints have "obtained a place among the righteous; and shall be made manifest in the Judgment of the kingdom of Christ." Chap. 21:11; 3:12, 15, 17. Then they are waiting till that time. In 2 Cor. 3:12, he speaks of "the combat of immortality," i. e., a fight to obtain it. In verse 13, he quotes Isa. 66:24. Verse 8: "If we do the will of Christ, we shall find rest; but if not, nothing shall deliver us from eternal punishment." Mark: he does not *say* eternal misery. Death is a punishment; eternal death will be an eternal punishment. See 2 Thess. 1:9.

The next in order of time is HERMAS, about A. D. 100. He had been a companion of Paul, Rom. 16:14. He speaks very much and very plainly on this subject. The word that he continually uses to express the punishment of the sinner, is "*death*." Vision 2:23: "For the remembrance of evils worketh *death*." Command 4:2: "They who do such things, follow the way of *death*." Command 12:2, 3, 6: Evil desire "*consumes* men," "*destroys*" the wicked, "delivers them unto *death*," "brings men unto *death*," and they *shall die* forever." Similitude 6:13: "These kind of men are ordained unto death." Verse 44: "Shall bring death upon themselves." Similar passages are too numerous to quote. Of the dead, he says, They "are those which are already *fallen asleep*." Vision 3:54. He says, "The wicked, like the trees which thou sawest



dry, shall as such be found dry and without fruit in the other world, and like dry wood shall be burnt." Similitude 4:4. Certainly this teaches that the wicked will be utterly burned up. Again, of the wicked, he says, "They shall *perish*." Similitude 6:10. They "shall lose life." Similitude 8:63. "But man being languid, *mortal*, infirm, and full of sins, perseveres in his anger against man." Similitude 9:207. If man is *mortal*, then he is not immortal.

IGNATIUS, bishop of Antioch, A. D. 107, is the next writer. In his epistle to the Ephesians, Chap. 4:1-6, he writes: "Be not deceived, my brethren; those that corrupt families by adultery shall *not inherit the kingdom of God*. If, therefore, they who do this according to the flesh, have suffered *death*; how much more shall he DIE, who by his wicked doctrine corrupts the faith of God, for which Christ was crucified? He that is thus defiled, shall depart into unquenchable fire, and so also shall he that hearkens to him. For this cause did the Lord suffer the ointment to be poured on his head, that he might breathe the *breath of immortality* unto his church. . . . Why do we suffer ourselves foolishly to *perish*; not considering the *gift* which the Lord has truly sent to us." Of the breaking of bread, probably meaning the Lord's supper, he says: "Which is the *medicine of immortality*, our antidote that we *should not die*, but live forever in Christ Jesus." Verse 16. These are too plain to need comment. They show that immortality is a gift of Christ, and all out of him have it not, but will *perish* and *die*.

In his letter to the *Magnesians*, Chap. 2:1, 7, he says: "Seeing, then, all things have an end, there are these two together set before us, *death*

and *life*." The bishop is "to be your pattern and direction *in the way to immortality*." If they are only in the way to immortality, then they had not yet arrived at it. Chap. 3:7, He says: "Should he have dealt with us according to our works, we *had not now had a being*."

In his letter to the *Trallians*, Chap. 1:5, he says: Christ "died for us, that so believing in his death, ye might *escape death*." In his letter to the *Romans*, Chap. 1:8, he says: "For it is good for me to set from the world unto God; that I may *rise again* unto him." Chap. 2:7: "But if I shall suffer [martyrdom], I shall then become the free man of Jesus Christ, and shall rise free." The resurrection was his hope. His letter to the *Philadelphians* contains nothing on this point.

In his epistle to the *Smyrnians*, he condemns those who said that Christ did not really die and rise again, but only seemed to. Says he: "And he suffered truly, as he also truly raised up himself; and not as some unbelievers say, that he only seemed to suffer, they themselves only seeming to be. And as they believe, so shall it happen unto them; when, being divested of the body, they shall become mere spirits!" Chap. 1:7, 8. Dr. Lardner says the word "spirit," here used, means a *phantom*.<sup>1</sup> As here used, it shows that Ignatius did not believe this any more than their theory of Christ's death. Verse 9: "But I know that even after his resurrection, he *was in the flesh*; and I believe that *he is still so*." This marks Ignatius a materialist. In conclusion, he says: "And for this cause, contradicting the gift of God, they die in their disputes: but much bet-

<sup>1</sup>Credibility, Vol. II, p. 92.



ter would it be for them to receive it, that they *might one day rise through it.*" Chap. 2:17.

His letter to *Polycarp* contains this exhortation: "Be sober, as the combatant of God: the crown proposed to thee is immortality and eternal life." Chap. 1:12. This is to the point; immortality is to be gained only by fighting for it; hence, sinners will never have it.

The last of the apostolic Fathers is POLYCARP, A. D., 166. In his letter to the *Philippians*, he says: "He that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also raise up us in like manner." Chap. 1:8. Whoever "says that there shall neither be any *resurrection*, nor judgment, he is the first-born of Satan." Chap. 3:2. "Charity delivereth from *death.*" Verse 11. This venerable father, who had been a companion of the apostle John, suffered martyrdom A. D. 169. His prayer at the stake, as given by Eusebius, shows what his faith was. He says: "I bless Thee that thou hast thought me worthy of the present day and hour, to have a share in the number of the martyrs and in the cup of Christ, *unto the resurrection of eternal life*, BOTH OF THE SOUL AND BODY, in the incorruptible felicity of the Holy Spirit."<sup>1</sup> Polycarp hoped for eternal life at the resurrection of both soul and body.

Thus we have the teachings of all the apostolical Fathers, reaching down to the middle of the second century. Reader, on which side is their testimony? They are totally silent about the immortal soul, endless hell, eternal torment, deathless spirit, or any such terms. On the contrary, they all along hold out immortality as a thing to be sought for, and to be gained only in Christ,

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius' Eccl. Hist., Book 4, Chap. xv, p. 148.

and at the resurrection. The dead are said to be asleep. They constantly affirm that the wicked shall die, perish, be consumed, destroyed, burned, blown away, etc. So we are safe in saying that thus far the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and eternal torment, has not found its way into the church of Christ.

#### THE EARLY FATHERS.

We must now introduce a different class of witnesses, *the early Fathers*. We cannot place so much reliance on them as upon the apostolic Fathers, as they began about this time to be more or less corrupted by heathen notions. JUSTIN MARTYR, about A. D. 164, comes first after the apostolic Fathers. He was a heathen philosopher, and after his conversion to Christianity, he still retained some of his old heathen notions.<sup>1</sup> He was a learned man, and wrote much. My limits will allow me to quote only briefly from him. The reader can see what his sentiments were.

1. He earnestly contended for the literal resurrection of the dead, and tried to meet all objections to it. "They who maintain the wrong opinion say that there is no resurrection of the flesh."<sup>2</sup> This doctrine he then refutes.

2. The doctrine of the second advent of Christ is prominent in all his writings.

3. He did not believe that the souls of men went to Heaven at death. He says: "If you have fallen in with some who are called Christians, but who do not admit this [the resurrec-

<sup>1</sup>Enfield's Hist. of Phil., Book 6, Chap. iii, pp. 454-7.

<sup>2</sup>On the Resurrection, Chap. ii. I quote from Justin's works as published in the "Ante-Nicene Christian Library," Vol. II.



tion], and venture to blaspheme the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; who say there is no resurrection of the dead, and that their souls, when they die, are taken to Heaven, do not imagine that they are Christians."<sup>1</sup> Here we have it plainly stated that it was heresy in that age to teach that men's souls went to Heaven at death.

4. He refutes the heretical doctrine just then being introduced, *that the soul alone is the man*, and can act without the body. Says he: "What is man but the reasonable animal composed of body and soul? Is the soul, by itself, man? No; but the soul of man. Would the body be called man? No; but it is called the body of man. If, then, neither of these is by itself man, but that which is made up of the two together is called man, and God has called man to life and resurrection; he has called, not a part, but the whole, which is the soul and body."<sup>2</sup> Again: "How then, did he raise the dead? Their souls or their bodies? *Manifestly both.*"<sup>3</sup> Once more: "For as in the case of a yoke of oxen, if one or other is loosed from the yoke, neither of them can plough alone; so neither can soul or body alone effect anything if they be unyoked from their communion."<sup>4</sup> Can this be misunderstood? Does it not teach that the soul sleeps with the body till the resurrection?

5. He denies the immortality of the soul. Thus: "For he ordained that, if he [Adam] kept this [God's command], he should partake of immortal existence; but if he transgressed it, the contrary

<sup>1</sup> Dialogue with Trypho, Chap. lxxx.

<sup>2</sup> On the Resurrection, Chap. viii.

<sup>3</sup> Id., Chap. ix.

<sup>4</sup> Id., Chap. viii.

should be his lot. Man, having been thus made, and immediately looking toward transgression, naturally became subject to corruption."<sup>1</sup> Hear him state the subject: "Now that the soul partakes of life, since God wills it to live, thus, then, it will not even partake [of life] when God does not will it to live. For to live is not its attribute, as it is God's; but as a man does not live always, and the soul is not forever conjoined with the body, since, whenever this harmony must be broken up, the soul leaves the body, and the man exists no longer; even so, whenever the soul must cease to exist, the spirit of life is removed from it, and there is no more soul, but it goes back to the place from whence it was taken."<sup>2</sup> No comments are needed here.

6. Justin teaches the utter extinction of the wicked. "Wherefore," says he, "God delays causing the confusion and destruction of the whole world, by which the *wicked angels, and demons, and men*, SHALL CEASE TO EXIST, because of the seed of the Christians, who know that they are the cause of preservation in nature."<sup>3</sup> The wicked will *cease to exist*. This is unequivocal, and cannot be misunderstood. He did not believe in eternal misery. Again: "Thus, some which have appeared worthy of God, never die; but others are punished so long as God *wills them to exist* and to be punished."<sup>4</sup>

Much more to the same end might be given from him, but I have not room, nor is it needed. Justin frequently says that the wicked shall suffer "everlasting punishment," eternal punishment,"

<sup>1</sup>Fragments, No. 11.

<sup>2</sup>Dialogue with Trypho, Chap. vi.

<sup>3</sup>Second Apology, Chap. vii.

<sup>4</sup>Dialogue with Trypho, Chap. v.



“in eternal fire,”<sup>1</sup> etc., yet he positively declares that they shall cease to exist. So here we have a good example of the limited use of those terms. They are often so used by all the Greeks. Dr. Kitto says that Justin Martyr “held that punishments, at least *sensible* ones, would sometime cease.”<sup>2</sup> Prof. Bush says he held the sleep of the soul.<sup>3</sup> Hagenbach, in his “History of Doctrines,” says Justin believed the soul to be mortal, and to perish with the body; that immortality was a reward to be acquired.<sup>4</sup> Ballou says he held to annihilation.<sup>5</sup>

Jeremiah Taylor clearly shows that the doctrine that souls go to Heaven at death, was not known to the primitive church, but was introduced at a late day by the Catholics. “It is,” says he, “a plain recession from antiquity which was determined by the council of Florence (1439), ‘that the souls of the saints are received immediately into Heaven, and clearly behold God himself, three in one,’ as who pleases to try may see it dogmatically resolved to the contrary by Justin Martyr, by Irenæus, by Origen, by St. Chrysostom, Theodoret, Arethus Carsariensis, Euthymus, who may answer for the Greek church.”<sup>6</sup> He also quotes a number of Latin authors, showing that they did not believe that souls went to Heaven at death.

Daille, in his famous work on the “Right Use of the Fathers,” says: “That Heaven shall not be opened till the second coming of Christ and

<sup>1</sup>First Apology, Chaps. viii, xii, xxviii, xlv, lii, etc.

<sup>2</sup>Cyclopedia of Biblical Literature, Art. Soul.

<sup>3</sup>Bush on the Resurrection, pp. 253, 254.

<sup>4</sup>Vol. I, pp. 162-164, Art. Immortality.

<sup>5</sup>Ancient Hist. of Universalism, p. 58.

<sup>6</sup>Liberty of Prophesying, § 8.

the day of Judgment—that during this time, the souls of all men, with a few exceptions, are shut up in the under world—was held by Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Augustine, Origen, Lactantius, Victorinus, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Theodoret, Œcumenius, Aretus, Prudentius, Theophylact, Bernard, and many others, as is confessed by all. This doctrine is literally held by the whole Greek church at the present day. Nor did any of the Latins expressly deny any part of it, until the council of Florence, in the year of our Lord 1439.”<sup>1</sup> So it is contrary both to the Bible and to the faith of the ancient church, that souls go immediately to Heaven at death.

TATIAN, A. D. 172, THE DISCIPLE OF JUSTIN  
MARTYR.<sup>2</sup>

Tatian seems to have believed about the same as Justin concerning the soul. He plainly denies that it is immortal, thus: “The soul is not in itself immortal, O Greeks, but mortal. Yet it is possible for it not to die. If, indeed, it knows not the truth, it dies, and is dissolved with the body, but rises again, at the last end of the world, with the body, receiving death by punishment in immortality. But, again, if it acquires the knowledge of God, it dies not, although for a time it be dissolved.”<sup>3</sup> We must then set down Tatian as another believer in the mortality of man, and the sleep of the dead.

<sup>1</sup>Doctrine of Future Life, Part 3, Chap. iii, p. 257.

<sup>2</sup>Horne's Intro., Vol. I, Chap. ii, § 2, p. 43.

<sup>3</sup>Address to the Greeks, Chap. xiii; Vol. III of the Ante-Nicene Christian Library.



MARTYRS OF THE CHURCH OF LYONS, FRANCE,  
A. D. 177.

A. D. 177, many of this church were cruelly martyred. Those who survived wrote an account of their sufferings, in which they say: "The bodies of the martyrs, after being abused in every possible manner, and thus exposed to the open air for six days, were at length burned and reduced to ashes by the wretches, and finally cast into the Rhone, that flows near at hand, that there might not be a vestige of them remaining on the land. These things they did as if they were able to overcome God, and destroy their resurrection, as they themselves gave out, that they might not have any hope of rising again, in the belief of which, they have introduced a new and strange religion, and condemn the most dreadful punishments, and are prepared to meet death even with joy. Now we shall see whether they will rise again, and whether their God is able to help them and rescue them out of our hands."<sup>1</sup>

This shows plainly that the only hope of those early martyrs was the resurrection, and their enemies thought that if they could destroy this hope, they would never have any future life.

## ATHENAGORAS, A. D. 180.

Of this Christian father, Horne says: He "is the most polished and elegant author of Christian antiquity."<sup>2</sup> The following passages show that he held to the sleep of the dead: "And let no one think it strange that we call by the name of life a

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius' Eccl. Hist., Book 5, Chap. i, p. 180.

<sup>2</sup> Intro. Vol. I, p. 43.

continuance of being which is interrupted by death and corruption. . . . I suppose some call sleep the brother of death, not as deriving their origin from the same ancestors and fathers, but because those who are dead and those who sleep, are subject to similar states, as regards, at least, the *stillness and the absence of all sense* of the present or the past, or rather, of existence itself and their own life.”<sup>1</sup> Hence, he naturally hangs all hope of a future life on the resurrection. Of man, he says: “The cause of his creation is a pledge of his continuance forever, and this continuance is a pledge of the resurrection, *without which man could not continue.*”<sup>2</sup> Again: “But it is impossible for him to continue unless he rise again; for, if no resurrection were to take place, the nature of men, as men, would not continue.”<sup>3</sup>

THEOPHILUS, BISHOP OF ANTIOCH, A. D. 181.

Theophilus takes this position: “For man had been made a middle nature, neither wholly mortal, nor altogether immortal, but capable of either.”<sup>4</sup> Again: “But some will say to us, was man made by nature mortal? Certainly not. Was he, then, immortal? Neither do we affirm this. But one will say, Was he, then, nothing? Not even this hits the mark. He was by nature neither mortal nor immortal; for if He had made him immortal from the beginning, he would have made him God. Again, if he had made him mortal, God would seem to be the cause of his death. Neither, then, immortal nor yet mortal did he make him,

<sup>1</sup> On the Resurrection of the Dead, Chap. xvi.

<sup>2</sup> Id., Chap. xiii.

<sup>3</sup> Id., Chap. xv.

<sup>4</sup> To Antolycus, Book 2, Chap. xxiv; Vol. III, Ante-Nicene Christian Library.



but, as we have said above, capable of both; so that if he should incline to the things of immortality, keeping the commandments of God, he should receive, as reward from him, immortality, and should become God; but, if, on the other hand, he should turn to the things of death, disobeying God, he should himself be the cause of death to himself.”<sup>1</sup>

I commend the above to the careful attention of the reader, both as showing the faith of the church at that time, and as a very reasonable doctrine. The church at Antioch was raised up by the apostles, and here the disciples were first called Christians.<sup>2</sup> Theophilus was the sixth bishop of that church, which was one of the largest in all the world at that time. Besides this, says his editor, he “had a profound acquaintance with the inspired writings.”<sup>3</sup> Hence, we may safely conclude that what he teaches from so high a station was the received orthodox doctrine of the church in that age. No one at that time censured him for thus teaching. Hence, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul was not yet received by the church of God.

#### IRENÆUS, BISHOP OF LYONS, A. D. 185.

That the wicked will not always continue to exist, he states thus: “He thus speaks respecting the salvation of man: He asked life of Thee, and thou gavest him length of days for ever and ever; indicating that it is the Father of all who imparts continuance for ever and ever on those who are saved. For life does not arise from us, nor from our own nature; but it is bestowed according to

<sup>1</sup> Id., Chap. xxvii. <sup>2</sup> Acts 11:22-26. <sup>3</sup> See Preface to his Works.

the grace of God. And, therefore, he who shall preserve the life bestowed upon him, and give thanks to him who imparted it, shall receive, also, length of days for ever and ever. But he who shall reject it, and prove himself ungrateful to his Maker, inasmuch as he has been created, and has not recognized him who bestowed [the gift upon him], deprives himself of [the privilege of] continuance for ever and ever."<sup>1</sup> Again, he says: To those who "are full of hypocrisy, and covetousness, and all wickedness, has he assigned everlasting perdition by cutting them off from life."<sup>2</sup> He says that Christ revealed "God to men through many dispensations, lest man, falling away from God altogether, should cease to exist."<sup>3</sup>

"Irenæus, like Justin, calls those 'heretics' who expected the saint's glorification to follow immediately after death, and before their resurrection."<sup>4</sup>

From these statements, it appears that Irenæus did not believe in the natural immortality of man, nor in the eternal conscious existence of the wicked.

POLYCRATES, BISHOP OF EPHESUS, A. D. 196.

He bears this interesting testimony: "In Asia, great lights have *fallen asleep*, which shall rise again in *the day of our Lord's appearing*, in which he will come with glory from Heaven, and will raise up all the saints. Philip, one of the twelve apostles, who *sleeps* in Hierapolis, and his two aged virgin daughters. . . Moreover, the

<sup>1</sup>Against Heresies, Book 2, Chap. xxxiv.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid, Book 4, Chap. xi.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., Book 4, Chap. xx.

<sup>4</sup>Voice of the Church, p. 62.



blessed Papirius, and Melito, the eunuch, whose walk and conversation were together under the influence of the Holy Spirit, who now rests at Sarais, awaiting the episcopate from Heaven, *when he shall rise from the dead.*"<sup>1</sup> Here we have this ancient bishop of a church which Paul had planted and Timothy watered, and where John died, bearing a good witness to the faith of the church in that age, in the sleep of the dead, the advent of Christ, and the resurrection. These saints were not in Heaven, but asleep, waiting for Christ.

Buck, in his "Theological Dictionary," mentions a sect, about this time, called the Lucianists, who denied the immortality of the soul. Of their leader, he says: "He denied the immortality of the soul, asserting it to be material."<sup>2</sup> Neander, in his "History of the Christian religion," mentions the Hermogenians, who denied the immortality of the soul. Of their leader, he says: "At all events, Hermogenes denied the natural immortality of the soul, and regarded immortality only as a consequence of the new divine life imparted by Christ; hence, he considers believers only to be immortal. All evil, evil spirits, and men who have not become partakers of the divine life, were finally to be resolved into the matter from whence they originally sprang."<sup>3</sup>

#### CLEMENT, OF ALEXANDRIA, A. D. 220.

By this time, the Platonic philosophy had begun to work its way into the church; and it is undeniable that Clement was largely tainted with it.

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, Book 5, Chap. ii. <sup>2</sup> Art. Lucianists. <sup>3</sup> Vol. II, p. 618. Immortality.

Yet he still seems to have held to the ancient Bible faith of immortality the gift of God. I quote his words: "For 'tis no insignificant prize, the guerdon of immortality which is set before us."<sup>1</sup> "Who promised immortality? The Maker of the universe alone."<sup>2</sup> Of the gospel, he says: "Excellent is the medicine of immortality."<sup>3</sup> Christ, "through the cross, brought death to life; and having wrenched man from destruction, he hath raised him to the skies, transplanting mortality into immortality."<sup>4</sup> "Let us haste, let us run, let us take his yoke; let us receive, to conduct us to immortality, the good charioteer of men. Let us love Christ. He led the colt with its parent, and having yoked the team of humanity to God, directs his chariot to immortality."<sup>5</sup> "Wherefore, let us regard the word as law, and his commands as the short and straight paths to immortality."<sup>6</sup> Thus he constantly affirms that immortality is only to be found by obedience to God and faith in Jesus. He was a restorationist.<sup>7</sup>

Of the early Fathers and their faith, Dr. Priestly, LL. D., F. R. S., says: "It was the opinion of most of the early Fathers that the world was to be destroyed by fire, and, also, that all men were to pass through this fire; that the good would be purified by it, and the wicked consumed." He further says: "The Gnostics are said to have maintained that the greatest part of mankind would be annihilated at the day of Judgment, which was probably the same thing that was meant by those who said that they would be consumed in the fire

<sup>1</sup> Exhortation to the Heathens, Chap. x, p. 90; Vol. IV, of Ante-Nicene Christian Library. <sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 91. <sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 102.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 108, 109.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 120.

<sup>7</sup> Ancient History of Universalism, Chap. iii, p. 69.



that was to destroy the world.”<sup>1</sup> “The ancient Fathers only thought that when this world would be destroyed by fire, that fire would purify the good, and devour the wicked.”<sup>2</sup>

It was the faith of the early church, as this learned author says above, that the wicked should be destroyed by the fire that finally purifies the earth. This is the teaching of Peter.<sup>3</sup>

#### THE ARABIANS, A. D. 244-249.

As we have shown in another chapter, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul began quite largely to be received by professed Christians in the first half of the third century. The primitive doctrine of the mortality of man, and the sleep of the dead, was now quite generally abandoned. Yet here and there we find, as late as this, those who had not yet apostatized from the Bible faith, though they were so few as to be counted heretics. Thus of the Arabians, A. D. 244-249, Eusebius writes:

“But about this time, also, other men sprung up in Arabia as the propagators of false opinions. These asserted that the human soul, as long as the present state of the world existed, perished at death and died with the body, but that it would be raised again with the body at the time of the resurrection. And as a considerable council was held on account of this, Origen being *again* requested, likewise *here* discussed the point in question with so much force that those who had been before led astray, completely changed their opinions.”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Corruptions of Christianity, Vol. I, pp. 411-413. <sup>2</sup> Ibid., p. 414.

<sup>3</sup> 2 Pet. iii. <sup>4</sup> Eusebius' Eccl. Hist., Book 6, Chap. xxxvii, p. 253.

1. They denied all consciousness of the dead till the resurrection. 2. Both soul and body were to live again at the resurrection. 3. The believers in this doctrine were so numerous as to require "a considerable council" to put them down; hence, their number and influence must have been large. 4. "Origen being *again* requested, likewise *here* discussed the point in question," says Eusebius. This shows that Origen had in other places, and before this, been called upon to defend his doctrine of the immortality of the soul. We have seen that it was chiefly through his great influence that it came into the church. The learned Dr. Neander thus candidly states the facts in the above case: "We must, however," says he, "still mention that, among the Christians of Arabia at that time, a party had caused a controversy, by maintaining that the soul died with the body, and that it would be raised again only at the general resurrection, at the same time with the body. *It was an old Jewish notion* that immortality was not founded upon the nature of the soul, but was a peculiar gift of divine grace; a representation which had been transferred from Judaism to Christianity, traces of which we find in the theory of the Gnostics about the nature of the Psychici, in the doctrine of the Clementine, and in the opinions of Justin and Tatian. Perhaps also in this district, the position of which placed it in close connection with the Jews, IT WAS NO NEW DOCTRINE, BUT THE PREDOMINANT ONE FROM ANCIENT TIMES; and perhaps the influence of Origen [in whose system the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul necessarily obtained a place] *first* effected the change that this latter should



obtain *universal* acceptance among the church teachers of that district ; and that the small party, which *still maintained the old opinion*, should appear heretical, although the predominant opinion had previously really pronounced itself against it [the new opinion]. Hence we may understand how the convocation of a *great synod* was considered necessary in order to allay these controversies. When they were unable to agree, Origen was invited by the synod, and his influence prevailed upon the opposers of the doctrine of the natural immortality of the soul, to acknowledge their error and renounce it."<sup>1</sup>

These admissions fully state all I have claimed on this question. The Arabians held to the old and ancient doctrine of the people of God, the sleep of the dead, and denied the immortality of the soul. It was not till the middle of the third century, and even then only by a mighty effort, that they were drawn from it. Dr. Good confirms Neander's statements, by saying that the Arabians never believed the immortality of the soul.<sup>2</sup>

#### ARNOBIUS, A. D. 300.

This author, in his large work "Against the Heathens," shows that he still holds to the old faith ; for he says that the wicked will "be thrown into torrents of fire, amidst dark caverns and whirlpools, where they shall at *length be annihilated and vanish in perpetual extinction.*"<sup>3</sup> He held that man was of a middle nature, neither

<sup>1</sup>Neander's Church Hist., Vol. I, § 5, p. 444.

<sup>2</sup>Book of Science, Series 3, Lect. 2, p. 372.

<sup>3</sup>Book 2, pp. 52, 53, quoted in Anct. Hist. of Universalism, Chap. vi, p. 152.

mortal nor immortal, but capable of either condition.<sup>1</sup>

The great and celebrated *Lactantius*, the disciple of *Arnobius*, held the same as his master. Thus he writes: "The other animals look downward, because they are of the earth, not having immortality, which is from Heaven; but man stands erect and looks upward, because immortality is offered him, though it comes not unless given from God. For there would be no difference between the just and the unjust, if every man that is born were made immortal. Immortality, therefore, is not a law of our nature, but the wages and reward of virtue."<sup>2</sup> This was the faith of all the Christians till Platonism came in and corrupted their doctrine. After this time we find only a few here and there still holding the old faith.

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## CHAPTER XIII.

### FROM THE THIRD CENTURY TILL THE REFORMATION.

FROM the third century, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul seems to have become thoroughly established in the church, as an orthodox dogma not to be questioned, though very many of the doctrines growing out of it were not at once seen and believed. Several learned historians say that *Tertullian*, A. D. 200-220, was

<sup>1</sup>Book 2, cc. xxxv, xxxvi.

<sup>2</sup>Inst. Div., Book 7, c. v, comp. Epitome, c. v.



the first Christian writer who expressly asserted the unending torments of the damned.<sup>1</sup> He was originally a pagan in belief, and by birth an African. He was of a fierce, fiery, rigid temper,—a fit man to father such a doctrine. He thus exults over the prospect of the pagans' burning in hell: "How shall I admire, how laugh, how rejoice, how exult, when I behold so many proud monarchs, so many fancied gods, groaning in the lowest abyss of darkness; so many magistrates who persecuted the name of the Lord, liquifying in fiercer fires than they ever kindled against the Christians; so many sage philosophers blushing in red-hot flames with their deluded scholars."<sup>2</sup> After quoting this, Gibbon exclaims: "The humanity of the reader will permit me to draw a veil over the rest of this infernal description."<sup>3</sup> But even this description has been surpassed in modern times, by believers in the same awful doctrine.

*Cyprian*, the disciple and successor of Tertullian, zealously advocated the same doctrine. By their authority it obtained a firm foothold in the church. Of them, an eminent historian says: "In order to ascertain the degree of authority which the zealous African [Tertullian] had acquired, it may be sufficient to allege the testimony of Cyprian, the doctor and guide of all the Western churches. As often as he applied himself to his daily study of the writings of Tertullian, he was accustomed to say, 'Give me my master.'"<sup>4</sup>

Says Neander, "Indeed, in many respects,

<sup>1</sup> Anct. Hist. of Universalism, Chap. iii, p. 80; Origin and Hist. of the Doctrine of Endless Punishment, Chap. vi, p. 198; and Prof. Hudson, Debt and Grace, Chap. viii, p. 326.

<sup>2</sup> Gibbon's Decline and Fall, Vol. I, Chap. xv, p. 538.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Tertullian stands generally at the line of demarkation between the old and the new time of the Christian church."<sup>1</sup> This was certainly true with regard to the doctrine of the future punishment of the wicked, to which he gave an entirely new idea. Again, Neander says: "Tertullian was the first who definitely and clearly proclaimed the doctrine of a proper human soul in Christ."<sup>2</sup> Origen, the great corrupter of Christianity, then took up this new idea, and had it fully established A. D. 244, as an orthodox dogma. Our historian says: "By means of Origen, who wrought out this doctrine so systematically, the idea of a proper, reasonable soul in Christ, received a new dogmatical importance. This point, which up to this time had been altogether untouched in the controversy with Patripassians, was now for the first time expressly brought forward in the synod held against Beryllus, of Bastra, A. D. 244; and the doctrine of a reasonable human soul in Christ, settled as the doctrine of the church."<sup>3</sup> Thus we have the origin of that doctrine.

*Augustine*, A. D. 415, was the first writer who attempted to prove that *aionios* strictly signified endless, and hence concluded that sinners would be eternally tormented!

#### PURGATORY.

The doctrine of purgatory soon and naturally grew out of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. Dr. Knapp gives the following truthful account of this doctrine:

"The foundation for the doctrine of purgatory is found even in the second and third centuries.

<sup>1</sup> Church Hist., p. 110.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 395.

<sup>3</sup>Pp. 396, 397.



Its origin may be traced back to the Pythagorean and the Platonic philosophy. Souls, according to Plato, are a part of the divine nature, which, however, are confined in the body, as in a prison. Vide s. 74, I. *ad finem*. Now, even after the soul of man is disembodied, there still cleaves to it much sin and impurity, acquired from its contact with the body, and this impurity is regarded by Plato as a natural *sickness*. It cannot, therefore, immediately on leaving the body, return again to its original source. With some, the disorder is incurable, and these are the *lost*, who go at once to *tartarus*; with others it is curable, and these are purged and purified in *hades*. . . This, with many other Platonic doctrines and fables, was early transferred to Christianity. . . . After the fourth century, it was more widely diffused through the Latin church. It is found in Hieronymus, Lactantius, Ambrosius, and even Augustine; the latter of whom, however, though he speaks of *ignis purgatorius*, regards the subject as doubtful. In the sixth century, this doctrine was taught by Gregory the Great."<sup>1</sup>

Thus we see the basis and origin of that baneful doctrine which has been the right arm of popery.

*Saint worship* was another branch of the immortal-soul doctrine, which the church received from the pagans. Bower says that Tertullian was the first who spoke of praying *for* the dead.<sup>2</sup> Says the historian: "The Roman Catholic ceremony of beatification and canonization of saints, offering them incense and prayers thereafter, means exactly what was meant by the ancient apotheosis; namely, that while the multitudes

<sup>1</sup> Christian Theology, § 150, p. 526.

<sup>2</sup> History of the Popes, Vol. II, p. 171, Note.

abide below, in the intermediate state, these favored souls have been advanced into Heaven. The papal functionaries borrowed this rite, with most of its details, from their immediate pagan predecessors."<sup>1</sup>

From the third century to the time of the Reformation under Luther, in the sixteenth century, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, purgatory, the horrible torments of hell, saint worship, and the like, gained still stronger and stronger hold upon the minds of the people. This was accomplished through the policy of the pope and his priests. They found these doctrines, as the pagan priests had before them, of the greatest advantage in terrifying the people and obtaining their money. Hence no opportunity was neglected to forward them by decrees, councils, etc. Of theology in the middle ages, Alger says: "Preaching consisted very much in the invitation, 'Submit to the guidance of the church while you live,' enforced by the threat, 'or you shall go to hell when you die.'"<sup>2</sup> Most of this time, "the Roman Catholic church and theology were the only Christianity publicly recognized. The heretics were few and powerless, and the papal system had full sway." In this time, "the loose notions about purgatory have been completed and consolidated; and the whole combined scheme has been organized as a *working instrument* of ecclesiastical power and profit. These changes seem to have been wrought out, first, by continual assimilations of Christianity to paganism, both in doctrine and ceremony, to win over the heathen." "A gloomy mist of credulity enwrapped the

<sup>1</sup>Alger, *Doctrine of a Future Life*, Part 5, c. i, p. 471.

<sup>2</sup>*Doctrine of a Future Life*, Part 4, Chap. ii, p. 407.



cathedral and the hall of justice, the cottage and the throne. In the dark shadows of the universal ignorance, a thousand superstitions, like foul animals of night, were propagated and nourished.”<sup>1</sup> The learned author continues: “Suffice it to say, the monks appeared at midnight in the cells of various persons, now impersonating devils, in horrid attire, breathing flames and brimstone, now claiming to be the souls of certain sufferers escaped from purgatory, and again pretending to be celebrated saints, with the Virgin Mary at their head. By the aid of mechanical and chemical arrangements, they wrought miracles, and played upon the terror and credulity of the spectators in a frightful manner.”<sup>2</sup>

Out of these doctrines grew the abominable sale of *indulgences*, which was carried to such an impious height in Luther’s time. The pope claimed the power to release souls from the pains of purgatory. This he would do for a certain sum of money. Rich and poor poured in their offerings, and thus the pope’s coffers were filled. Hence it was for their interest to propagate these doctrines.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### FROM THE REFORMATION TILL THE PRESENT TIME.

THIS brings us to the time of the Reformation, when, once more, we find the doctrine of the soul’s immortality, purgatory, eternal torment, con-

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., pp. 407, 408, 417.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 419.

scious state of the dead, etc., called in question and rejected.

From a canon enacted in the Lateran Council, under Leo X, 1513, it appears that some persons were denying the immortality of man. Thus says the council: "Whereas, in these our days, some have dared to assert, concerning the nature of the reasonable soul, that it is mortal, or one and the same in all men; and some, rather philosophizing, declare this to be true, at least according to philosophy. We, with the approbation of the sacred council, do condemn and reprobate all those who assert that the intellectual soul is mortal."<sup>1</sup> This shows that the question was being discussed. We also see how ready Rome was to defend its pet child.

In 1520, Luther published forty-one propositions in defense of his position. In the twenty-seventh, he says thus: "I permit the pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful, such as, the bread and wine are transubstantiated in the sacrament; the essence of God neither generates, nor is generated; the soul is the substantial form of the body; the pope is the emperor of the world, and the king of Heaven, and God upon earth; *the soul is immortal*; with all those monstrous opinions to be found in the Roman dung-hill of decretals, that such as his faith is, such may be his gospel, such his disciples, and such his church, that the mouth may have meat suitable for it, and the dish, a cover worthy of it."<sup>2</sup>

This indicates very plainly that the great reformer believed the immortality of the soul to be

<sup>1</sup>Historical View of the Controversy Concerning an Intermediate State, by Archdeacon Blackburn, London, 1772, Chap. ii, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Chap. iv, pp. 13, 14.



only a child of the pope. I think it can be shown that Luther did embrace the doctrine of the sleep of the dead, and died in that faith. I will present some of the evidence for the reader's consideration :

1. We see above that Luther calls the doctrine of the soul's immortality a "monstrous opinion." 2. Cardinal Du Perron says: "Luther held that the soul died with the body, and that God would hereafter raise both the one and the other."<sup>1</sup> 3. A Lutheran minister denied this charge, and in refuting it, said: "The origin of this calumny is a letter he [Luther] wrote to Amsdorf in the year 1522; in which he appears much inclined to believe that the souls of the just sleep to the day of Judgment, without knowing where they are. He does not pretend to say that they are dead in this interval, but only lie in a profound rest and sleep, in which opinion he followed many fathers of the ancient church."<sup>2</sup> We could ask no better confession than this to Luther's faith in the sleep of the soul. It also confesses that this was the faith of the ancient Fathers. 4. Another learned writer, speaking of the appearance of ghosts in 1534, says: "But after Luther's doctrine came to be understood, and had gained a little strength, this kind of specters by degrees vanished away. For Luther teaches from the Scriptures, that the souls of the dead are at rest, waiting for the final day of Judgment."<sup>3</sup> Here is another witness exactly harmonizing with the others. 5. Dr. Priestly says: "The Helvetic

<sup>1</sup>Perroniana au Motte (Luther), quoted in Hist. View, p. 344.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 347; also Bayle's Dictionary, Art. Luther.

<sup>3</sup>Sleidan Comment, L. 9, pp. 239-242, quoted in Historical View, Chap. vi, p. 23.

convention condemns all those who believe the sleep of the soul, which shows that a considerable number must have maintained it. Luther himself was of this opinion, though, whether he died in it has been doubted."<sup>1</sup> 6. Dr Alger says, of Luther: "It is probable that the great reformer's opinion on this point was not always the same. For he says distinctly, 'The first man who died, when he awakes at the last day, will think he has been asleep but an hour.'"<sup>2</sup> 7. The papists accused Luther, and said that he taught thus: "We can now find out a better way to abolish purgatory, the mass, and the Roman pontiff, than by saying that the soul and body die together. Such was the opinion of this gentleman. And then afterward, to confirm this doctrine, came out public theses, printed and disputed in Geneva, in the year 1558, wherein were these words: "All that is said concerning the immortality of the soul, said this proponent, is nothing else but an invention of Antichrist, to make his pot boil."<sup>3</sup>

Put these facts and testimonies together, and it clearly appears that the great reformer believed in the mortality of the soul, and the sleep of the dead. He used this truth, too, against the Romish doctrine of purgatory and saint worship.

Moreover, Blackburn, Priestly, and others, are of opinion that Luther's doctrine would have been generally received by the Protestants, had it not been for the opposition and authority of Calvin. Very many of the early reformers embraced the doctrine of the sleep of the dead, and defended it in books and arguments. This appears from

<sup>1</sup>Corruptions of Chris., Vol. I, Lond., 1782, § 3, p. 424.

<sup>2</sup>Doctrine of a Future Life, Part 4, Chap. iii, p. 431, Note.

<sup>3</sup>Bayle's Dict., Art. Luther.



what Calvin was stirred up to write against them, which he did at first in a very harsh, violent style, in a tract called "*Psychopannychia*." In the preface, he says: "Long ago, when certain pious persons invited, and even urged me, to publish something for the purpose of repressing the extravagance of those who alike ignorantly and tumultuously maintain that the *soul dies or sleeps*, I could not be induced by all their urging, so averse did I feel to engage in that kind of dispute. At that time, indeed, I was not without excuse, partly because I hoped that that absurd dogma would soon vanish of its own accord, or at least be confined to a few triflers. . . . The result, however, has been different from what I hoped. These babblers have so *actively exerted* themselves, that they have *already drawn thousands into their insanity*." "They are said to circulate their follies in a kind of tracts, which I have not happened to see." This is dated, Orleans, 1534.

From the above we see, that, 1. This doctrine had been advocated "long" before he wrote. 3. It was not confined to "a few triflers." 3. Its advocates "actively exerted themselves" in spreading the doctrine, by publishing books, etc. 4. It was gaining ground, so fast that "thousands" had already received it. But it seems that Calvin himself did not yet realize how extensively it had spread, and that "some good men" had received it. Hence his book gave much offense. So, in another edition of his book, dated Basil, 1536, he says: "On again reading this discussion, I observe that, in the heat of argument, some rather severe and harsh expressions have escaped me, which may perhaps give offense to delicate ears; and as I know that *there are some good men*

into whose minds some parts of this dogma has been instilled, either from excessive credulity or ignorance of Scriptures with which at the time they were not armed so as to be able to resist, I am unwilling to give them offense so far as they will allow me, since they are neither perverse nor malicious in their error." Says Dr Priestly: "It was, however, the firm belief of so many of the reformers of that age, that had it not been for the authority of Calvin, who wrote expressly against it, the doctrine of an intermediate state would, in all probability, have been as effectually exploded as the doctrine of purgatory itself."<sup>1</sup>

Duke George, of Saxony, wrote to his brother Frederick, complaining that, in consequence of Luther's teachings, this doctrine was spreading among his people. Says Milner, in his "Church History": "In a letter written with his own hand, he [George] complains heavily to this prince, of the heretical transactions at Wittemberg and Zwickau, and of the remissness of his brother, the elector. The faithful clergy were insulted, and even pelted with stones, while those of the Lutheran sect married wives, and wrote books in defense of the marriages of the monks. There were even some who were destitute of all religion, and *denied the immortality of the soul*. All these evils, said he, proceed from the novel doctrines of the arch-heretic [Luther]; and gave him the more pain, since he had found the contagion spreading among his own subjects."<sup>2</sup> Here again we see the denial of the immortality of the soul spreading among the reformers, and it is by all ascribed to Luther. The same doctrine, also,

<sup>1</sup>Corruptions of Chris., Vol. I. § 3, p. 424.    <sup>2</sup>Vol. II, p. 356.



was advocated by certain Protestants in Italy.<sup>1</sup>

In 1530, William Tyndale answered Sir Thomas More's Dialogue. More objected to Luther that he held "that all souls lie and sleep till doomsday." We would expect that if this were not Luther's doctrine, Tyndale would have denied it. Instead of that, however, he proceeds to defend it, both as the doctrine of Luther and of the Bible, thus: "And ye, in putting them [departed souls] in Heaven, hell, and purgatory, destroy the arguments wherewith Christ and Paul prove the resurrection. What God doth with them, that shall we know when we come to them. The true faith putteth the resurrection, which we be warned to look for every hour. The heathen philosophers denying *that*, did put, that the souls did ever live. And the pope joineth the spiritual doctrine of Christ, and the fleshly doctrine of philosophers together, things so contrary that they cannot agree, no more than the spirit and the flesh do in a Christian man. And because the fleshly-minded pope consenteth unto heathen doctrines, therefore he corrupteth the Scripture to establish it." "If the souls be in Heaven, tell me why they be not in as good case as the angels be? And then, what cause is there of the resurrection?"<sup>2</sup>

This shows that Tyndale did not believe that souls go to Heaven at death, but that they sleep till the resurrection. He argues correctly that the opposite doctrine destroys the resurrection. He also agrees with Luther that the immortality of the soul was a popish doctrine borrowed from

<sup>1</sup>Bayle's Dict., Art. Luther.

<sup>2</sup>Tyndale's Works, published by Fox, 1573, p. 324.  
Immortality.

the heathen. Again, More says: "What shall he care how long he live in sin, that believeth Luther, that he shall after this life feel neither good nor evil in body nor soul, until the day of doom?" Tyndale answers: "Christ and his apostles taught no other, but warned to look for Christ's coming again every hour, which coming again because ye believe will never be, therefore have ye feigned that other merchandise."<sup>1</sup> This plainly shows what was the doctrine of the first reformers upon this subject.

But all the ability and authority of Calvin was brought to bear against the doctrine of the mortality of the soul and sleep of the dead. He established a school of theology at Geneva, which became very famous, and attracted students from all parts of Europe; and the doctrine of immortality, as there taught, gradually came to be considered the orthodox doctrine of the various Protestant churches. Many things conspired to bring this around. The reformers were accused of overturning and denying all religion. Hence, many doctrines and practices of Rome, which they were at first inclined to reject, were finally retained to avoid offense. In all, but what they considered vital points, they took this compromising course. Melancthon, especially, was noted for this.

"The honor of first condemning this tenet [of the sleep of the soul] was reserved for our English reformers, who, in the fortieth of King Edward's articles, composed in the year 1552, and published the year following, expressed themselves thus:

"They who say that the souls of such as depart hence, do sleep, being without all sense, feeling, and perceiving, until the day of Judgment, or

<sup>1</sup>Ibid., p. 327.



affirm that the souls die with the bodies, and, at the last day, shall be raised up with the same, do utterly dissent from the right belief declared unto us in the holy Scriptures.'"<sup>1</sup>

This shows that the doctrine had become sufficiently extended to claim the attention of that honorable body. In the year 1566, was published the second Helvetic confession, fabricated entirely upon the Calvinistical plan. A part of Article XV runs thus: "We hold that man consists of two, and those different, substances in one person: of an immortal soul, seeing that, being separated from the body, it neither sleeps nor dies; and of a mortal body which yet, at the last Judgment, shall be raised from the dead, that the whole man, from thenceforward, may remain to eternity, either in life or death. We condemn all who scoff at the immortality of the soul, or bring it into doubt by subtle disputations, or who say that the soul sleeps."<sup>2</sup>

This shows that all previous efforts had failed to put down those who denied the immortality of the soul. Article XXVI of the same confession says: "We believe that the faithful migrate directly from their corporeal death to Christ. . . We also believe that the wicked are directly precipitated into hell." This is the first public avowal by a Protestant church of the belief that the saints go directly to Heaven at death. Thus, they directly contradicted Tyndale, Luther, the early Fathers, and the Bible.

Mosheim mentions the "General Baptists," who flourished in England in this (sixteenth) century. In enumerating the articles of their faith, he says:

<sup>1</sup> Blackburn's Hist. View, Chap. viii, p. 34.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., Chap. ix, p. 37.

“VI. They believed that the soul, between death and the resurrection at the last day, has neither pleasure nor pain, but is in a state of insensibility.”<sup>1</sup> Of their number, he says that they “*are dispersed in great numbers over many provinces of England.*”<sup>2</sup> Here we have the whole of a large sect of the early Protestants believing in the sleep of the soul.

Another large sect of the early reformers, called the “Socinians,” also denied the immortality of the soul, and held to the sleep of the dead and the annihilation of the wicked. Mosheim says that they taught that “those who obey the voice of this divine teacher, and all can obey it, if so disposed, being clad in other bodies, shall hereafter forever inhabit the blessed abode where God resides; those who do otherwise, being consumed by exquisite torments, will at length sink into *entire annihilation.*”<sup>3</sup> Alger, in his “History of the Doctrine of a Future Life,” says of them: “The Socinian doctrine, relative to the future fate of man, . . . declared that the wicked, after suffering excruciating agonies, would be annihilated. Respecting the second coming of Christ, a physical resurrection of the dead, and a day of Judgment, the Socinians believed with the other sects.”<sup>4</sup> This sect originated in the time of the Reformation. Says Mosheim: “Few are unap- prised that the first originators of the Socinian scheme possessed fine talents and much erudition.”<sup>5</sup> They suffered great persecution on ac-

<sup>1</sup> Murdock's Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., Vol. III, Book 4, Cent. 16, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 238. See, also, Adams' View of All Religions, p. 259, Art. Socinians.

<sup>4</sup> Part 4, Chap. iii, p. 428.

<sup>5</sup> Murdock's Mosheim's Eccl. Hist., Vol. III, Part 2, Chap. iv, p. 240. Also, Hayward's Book of All Religions, Art. Socinians.



count of their faith; but succeeded in establishing flourishing societies in Poland and in Transylvania.

Indeed, all along from Luther's time till now, we find different ones, and many of them learned men in high positions in the church and in the State, speaking out against the heathen doctrine of the immortality of man. We can mention only a few.

In 1644, an excellent little work came out, having this title: "A Treatise, wherein it is Proved, both theologically and philosophically, that the Whole Man is a Compound wholly Mortal," etc. It was signed, R. O. It provoked considerable controversy. A second edition was printed at London, 1655. In the latter part of the sixteenth century, the great philosopher, John Lock, wrote against the immateriality of the soul, denying that it could be proved.<sup>1</sup>

That he did not believe man immortal, nor believe in the conscious state of the dead, nor in eternal misery, is very evident from his language. Thus he says: "And by this fall, he [Adam] lost paradise; wherein was tranquillity, and the tree of life: that is, he lost bliss and immortality."<sup>2</sup> Again: "But an exclusion from Paradise, and loss of immortality, is the portion of sinners."<sup>3</sup> Of the death threatened in Gen. 2:17, he says: "I must confess, by death here, I can understand nothing but a *ceasing to be* (that is, the losing of all actions of life and sense.)"<sup>4</sup> Again: "But it seems a strange way of understanding a law (which requires the plainest and directest words),

<sup>1</sup> Lock's Essays.

<sup>2</sup> Reasonableness of Christianity, § 1, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

that by *death* should be meant eternal life in misery."<sup>1</sup>

This was a heavy blow in the right place, and it had its effects. In 1702, Dr. William Coward, London, published a book with this title: "Second Thoughts concerning Human Soul, demonstrating the Notion of Human Soul, as Believed to be a Spiritual, Immortal Substance United to the Human Body, to be a Plain, Heathenish Invention." Of this able scholar and Christian, Alger says: "The famous Dr. Coward, and a few supporters, labored, with much zeal, skill, and show of learning, to prove the natural mortality of the soul."<sup>2</sup> In 1706, Coward published another book for the same purpose. These works stirred up furious attacks from the churchmen, and he was denounced as a heretic. But it brought out investigation, and did good. In 1706, Henry Layton, a rich gentleman and a lawyer, came to the aid of Dr. Coward, and published a book entitled, "A Search after Souls," in which he answers at full length the arguments used to prove the soul immortal. His book, however, seems not to have had an extensive circulation. In 1755, the learned Bishop Law published his "Appendix to his Considerations on the Theory of Religion," in which he vigorously attacked the theory of the conscious state of the dead. This coming from so high a source, the friends of that theory were greatly alarmed, and ran to its defense.

In 1765, Mr. Blackburn, A. M., archdeacon of Cleveland, England, issued his well-known and valuable book, "An Historical View of the Controversy concerning an Intermediate State." In

<sup>1</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Doctrine of a Future Life, Part 4, Chap. iii, p. 430.



this he gives an account of the various works written on this question, from the Reformation till his own time. He reviewed and answered the main arguments advanced to sustain the immortality of the soul. He was a zealous and able advocate of the mortality of man, sleep of the dead, etc. In 1772, he published the second edition of his book, which has had a good circulation, and has given much help to the cause of truth.

Joseph Priestly, the very learned philosopher and divine of the Unitarian church, who died in 1804, was a materialist, and wrote extensively in favor of that doctrine. Says the historian: "Dr. Priestly's opinion respecting the soul, of course led him to disbelieve the doctrine of an intermediate state."<sup>1</sup>

Says Buck, in his "Theological Dictionary," "The great Dr. Watts may be considered, in some measure, a destructionist; since it was his opinion that the children of ungodly parents, who die in infancy, are annihilated."<sup>2</sup> It further appears that he was strongly inclined to believe in the utter destruction of all the wicked. Hear him:

"Let us consider it [death] as it relates to the soul of man. The soul is an immaterial and thinking being; it has in itself no natural principles of dissolution; and, therefore, so far as we can judge, it must be immortal in its own nature. But who can say whether the word *death* might not be fairly construed to extend to the utter destruction of the life of the soul, as well as the body, if God, the righteous governor, should please to seize the forfeiture. For man, by sin, has forfeited all that God had given him; that is, the life

<sup>1</sup> Religion of All Nations, Art. Unitarians, p. 156.

<sup>2</sup> Art. Destructionists.

and existence of his soul, as well as his body. All is forfeited, by sin, into the hands of God; and why might not the threatening declare the right that ever a God of goodness had to resume all back again, and utterly destroy and annihilate his creatures forever? There is not one place of Scripture, that occurs to me, where the word *death*, as it was first threatened in the law of innocency, necessarily signifies a certain miserable immortality of the soul, either to Adam, the actual sinner, or to his posterity.”<sup>1</sup> This clearly shows the faith of this great man.

In the city of Norwich, England, this theory was advocated by Samuel Bourne, and also by John Marsom, by various writings. But perhaps no man has dealt a heavier blow against the immortality of the soul than the eminent and learned Dr. Whately, archbishop of Dublin. His popularity as a scholar, and his high position as an ecclesiastical dignitary, have secured to his writings both attention and a wide circulation. His work entitled, “A View of the Scripture Revelations Concerning a Future State,” evidently made many converts to his faith; for it was soon followed by many other books from different ministers in England. In 1843, Rev. Mr. Courtney, rector of Thornton Watless, issued a book advocating the unpopular side of the question. In 1846, H. H. Dobney, Baptist minister of England, published a most excellent and candid book, entitled, “Doctrine of Future Punishment.” About the same time, Edward White, Congregational minister at Hereford, England, put forth a volume

<sup>1</sup>Ruin and Recovery, Quest. 11, § 3. Also World to Come, p. 162.



in defense of the same doctrine, entitled, "Life in Christ."

These men are still at work in the good cause. Ministers in Edinburgh, and in Bristol, and in Plymouth, have spoken out boldly, and well, in defense of the unpopular doctrine of the mortality of man, sleep of the dead, and destruction of the wicked. J. Panton Ham has done good execution this way. A distinguished advocate of this doctrine has appeared in the Right Honorable Sir James Stephen, Prof. of History, at Cambridge, England. Advocates of this doctrine are now springing up all over Great Britain; and a paper, "*The Rainbow*," published by Wm. Leask, D. D., Kingsland, England, is now being published to spread the light on this long-neglected truth.

In a late article, the English correspondent of *The Presbyterian*, Philadelphia, Pa., says: "There is, and has been for some time, a good deal of discussion among a limited number of both churchmen and non-conformists on the awful question of everlasting punishment, and it is gradually revealing opinions and arguments which are sure to do much mischief. It has come to pass that the Church of England and the Congregational body have men of mark who hold that the wicked and impenitent will not be consigned to endless torment; but will be utterly extinguished and literally destroyed." He then names several ministers who hold these views. Says *The Advance*, a Methodist paper, "The doctrine of the annihilation of the wicked is receiving increased attention in Great Britain and in America."

But it is in the United States that this doctrine is taking the deepest root and spreading the fastest.

In 1803, a church sprung up simultaneously in many parts of the United States, calling themselves *Christians*. Some call them *Christ-ians*. They rejected the immortality of the soul, eternal misery, etc. Of them, the historian says: "They declared that the atonement was full; that the *wicked at death were to be annihilated*,"<sup>1</sup> etc. This, however, was not a prominent article of their faith; hence, at present, some of them hold to it, and others do not.

In 1837, Mr. Geo. Storrs, a Methodist preacher, first had his mind called to this subject by reading a pamphlet, put out by Henry Grew, of Philadelphia. After thoroughly studying the subject for some three or four years, he adopted the doctrine of the mortality of man, destruction of the wicked, etc. In 1841, he published "Three Letters" to prominent ministers. In 1842, he preached in Albany, N. Y., "Six Sermons" on this subject. These he soon after published, and scattered extensively. In the fall of 1842, he embraced the doctrine of the soon coming of Christ, as taught by Adventists. The next year he traveled and preached very extensively among them, and freely scattered his "Six Sermons" among his hearers. His views met with much opposition; yet some prominent men embraced them. In 1843, he started the *Bible Examiner*, as an occasional issue. Later, it was made a monthly. After 1844, many of the Adventists embraced these views. Numerous small tracts were soon scattered all over the country, like leaves in autumn. Believers were raised up everywhere, and among them many able speakers and writers. Most of the Adventists have rejected

<sup>1</sup>The Religions of all Nations, Art. Christians, p. 175.



the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, and are zealously teaching the opposite. Probably now there are not less than seventy-five or one hundred thousand professed believers in the mortality of man, and the destruction of the wicked, and their number is increasing quite rapidly. Nor is this question confined to the Adventists; but some in every denomination are receiving these views. On this point, the *Methodist Home Journal*, for March 26, 1870, says: "There are many candid minds in the churches that are more or less unsettled, and honestly and eagerly seeking for new measures of light upon the question."

About a dozen papers are now being published which advocate this doctrine. The leading ones are, *The World's Crisis*, Boston, Mass.; *The Advent Christian Times*, Buchanan, Mich.; *The Review and Herald*, Battle Creek, Mich.; *The Herald of Life*, New York City; *The Restitution*, Chicago, Ill.; all defending this doctrine. Very many, not only tracts, but respectable volumes, are already before the public, advocating the unpopular side of the question. As might be expected, these have brought out numerous publications on the opposite side, advocating the "orthodox" theory of the immortality of the soul, and eternal misery of the wicked. Evidently this is becoming a leading theological question of the times. Bare assertions will no longer be taken as satisfactory upon it: they demand *proof* and investigation. Debates upon it between different ministers are of almost weekly occurrence. The horrid descriptions of hell, and the eternal torments of the damned, which were once so shockingly common, are now seldom heard from any pulpit. In all my travels, from Maine to Iowa, I

have found in every community, persons both in the churches and out, who say that they have never been able to believe the popular doctrine on this question.

Very many of the denomination called "Disciples," or "Campbellites," believe in the sleep of the dead and destruction of the wicked, though generally, as a denomination, they do not hold these sentiments.

On the whole, it seems evident that in the providence of God the time has fully come for the fables and errors connected with this important question to be exposed, and for the glorious truth of the Bible once more to shine out. A revolution is at hand, and may God speed it on!





## APPENDIX.

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THE following pages, from the pen of ELD. D. T. TAYLOR, of Vermont, on the history of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul in the Christian Church, has been kindly contributed to this work. The sketch is more full and complete than any that has heretofore appeared on this point, and shows that not all even in the bosom of the church have believed in the immortality of the soul. It has cost the author much labor and research, and will well repay a careful perusal. It contains much valuable information in few words.

PUBLISHERS.

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### THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL, NOT A DOCTRINE UNIVERSALLY BELIEVED.

The following information, bearing upon the subject referred to in the heading of this article, gleaned from Dupin, Clarke, Hudson, and other writers, will show that numerous persons in the Christian church have held to the soul's mortality, its sleep in death, and have also denied the doctrine of eternal, conscious torture in a future world. Some of these facts are new to most readers, and may lead to further investigation and discovery in the history of these opinions. Here are the testimonies:

*Justin Martyr*, of A. D. 140; one of the best and most orthodox of the early Christians. "He seems," writes Dupin, "to have thought that the souls of the wicked should at last become capable

of dying; though, in other places, he affirms that their torments shall be eternal."—*History Eccl. Writers*, Vol. I, p. 67. Prof. Hudson asserts that Justin never calls the soul immortal. And Gieseler, the church historian, says, "Justin appears to regard it as possible that the souls of the ungodly will be at some time wholly annihilated." Sec. 45.

*Tatian* was Justin's pupil in A. D. 172. "He denies," says Dupin, "the immortality of souls; affirming that they die, and that they shall hereafter rise again with their respective bodies."—*History Eccl. Writers*, Vol. I, p. 69. Dr. Adam Clarke says he believes "that the soul cannot be immortal without union with the Holy Spirit; but, partaking of the nature of flesh while living without God, dies with the body."—*Sacred Literature*, Vol. I, p. 102. *Tatian's* language is this: "The soul is not, in its own nature, immortal, O Greeks, but mortal; yet it is able not to die. For it does die, and is dissolved with the body, if ignorant of the truth; but rises again with the body at the end of the world, receiving death in immortality for its punishment."—*Oration vs. the Greeks*, c. 13.

*Irenæus*, a Christian bishop, A. D. 178. Dupin thus presents his belief: "In his second book, he treats at large concerning the faculties of the soul; he conceives that it is distinguished from the body, and that it is of a different nature. He there refutes the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls out of one body into another, and proves that those of the just shall subsist eternally. But he seems to have believed, as well as St. Justin, that they are immortal only through grace, and that those of the wicked shall cease



to be, after they have been tormented for a long time."—*Hist.*, p. 75. Irenæus' words are: "He who rejects [the grant of life], and proves unthankful to his Maker for creating him, and will not know Him who bestows it, deprives himself of the gift of duration to all eternity." Hudson quotes his views at length in "Debt and Grace," pp. 300, 301. Both Irenæus and Justin Martyr refused to regard as orthodox Christians those persons who taught that the souls of the pious, at death, went immediately to Heaven, the super-celestial place. It is not a little remarkable that these two leading Christians of the second century should have held doctrines so opposed to the present popular faith.

*The Arabian Christians*, A. D. 230. We only know of these believers from the testimony of their opponents, and that they once held to the doctrine of the sleep of the dead. Eusebius, in Chap. xxxvii of his Church History, writes: "But about this time, also, other men sprung up in Arabia as the propagators of false opinions. These asserted that the human soul, as long as the present state of the world existed, perished at death, and died with the body, but that it would be raised again with the body at the time of the resurrection. And as a considerable council was held on account of this, Origen, being again requested, likewise here discussed the point in question with so much force that those who had before been led astray, completely changed their opinion." It thus appears that this Platonist, with his immense stores of learning, reasoned the soul-sleepers out of their former belief into the notion of the soul's immortality.

*Methodius*, bishop of Tyre, in A. D. 290, is set

forth, by Dupin, as believing "that man was created immortal, but that his sin causing him to incline toward the earth, God made him mortal, lest he should continue a sinner everlastingly."—*Hist. Eccl. Writers*, Vol. I, p. 144. This writer may be classed among those of whom Bishop Patrick writes, saying: "Many of the ancient Fathers looked upon the expulsion of Adam from Eden as a merciful dispensation, that man might not be perpetuated in a state of sin." He denied the doctrine of eternal pain.

*Arnobius*, a Christian writer of A. D. 306, wrote on the nature of the soul, the resurrection of the body, and hell fire. Says Dupin: "He takes occasion from thence to discourse of the nature of souls; he pretends that they are of a middle quality between a spirit and a body, that they are by nature mortal, but that God of his goodness immortalizes the souls of those who repose their confidence in him. He confutes Plato's notions concerning the soul's immortality, and its excellency, dignity, exile or imprisonment in the body. He supposes that it is corporeal and *ex traduce*; that man is but very little different from the beasts; that his soul is mortal by nature, but that it becomes immortal by the grace of God."—*Hist. Eccl. Writers*, Vol. I, p. 147. This writer evidently held to the annihilation of the wicked; for he says, "They are hurled down and reduced to nothingness, they vanish away in the abortion of an eternal destruction;" "they can die if they know not God;" this "utter destruction" he calls "the real death of man which leaves him nothing." "Souls that know not God are consumed by long-continued torment, by a fierce fire." That souls are immortal, he calls "a vain hope." He says



they shall suffer dissolution, decay, and come to naught."—See *Hudson*, p. 302–305.

*Athanasius* was bishop of Alexandria, A. D. 326. He is styled "The Father of Orthodoxy." From *Hudson's* "Debt and Grace," pp. 305–308, we learn that this very celebrated man held that the soul did not die with the body, that it was not immortal, but even in the intermediate state spent its time in contemplating immortality, and beholding immortal things, which to it became "an incentive, as it were, for the securing of immortality." *Athanasius* also says: "Immortality, and the kingdom of Heaven, is the fruit of faith and piety toward [Christ], if only the soul be adorned with his precepts. For, as eternal life is the reward of those who walk in His ways, so, to those who depart from him, and walk not in the path of virtue, there is great shame and remediless doom in the day of Judgment." But "he never speaks," says *Hudson*, "of the wicked as being immortal, or as suffering forever." This writer also taught that the doom of Adam and Eve was in death to revert to their original and native condition of non-existence, or total loss and destruction of their being. "Divested of the nature of existing forever," he says, "they must perish and remain in corruption." "For," he adds, "man is by nature mortal, seeing he was created from non-being."

*Helary* was bishop of Poitiers, A. D. 354. "He taught that Christ restores unto man that immortality which the first man had lost by his sin; but that the impious shall be, as it were, annihilated by the fires of hell. He confesses that they shall rise again at the day of Judgment; but he maintains that they shall not there be judged at all,

Immortality.

because they are already condemned.”—*Dupin*, I., p. 199. The views of this writer are here ambiguously stated; consequently, they are doubtful.

#### DENIERS OF ENDLESS MISERY.

Such was *Origen*, A. D. 230; *Gregory Thaumaturgus*, A. D. 243; *Pierius* and *Theognostus*, A. D. 282; *Methodius*, A. D. 290; *Pamphilus*, A. D. 294; *Eusebius*, A. D. 320; *Titus*, A. D. 362; *Didymus*, A. D. 370; *Gregory*, *Nysseu*, A. D. 371; *Diodorus*, A. D. 378; *Theodore*, A. D. 394; *Maximus*, A. D. 662; and *Nicholas*, A. D. 1096. All these, and probably others, held to restorationism; consequently, they repudiated the doctrine of eternal suffering. (*Debt and Grace*, p. 324.)

*Cyril*, bishop of Jerusalem, A. D. 348, in answering the question, Why are all men subject to death and sin upon the account of Adam's transgression? replies, “We are not punished as having sinned with the first man, but because he being become mortal by his sins, hath transferred that curse to all his posterity.”—*Dupin*, I., p. 437. On the parable of the rich man and Lazarus, and the state of souls in death, this writer is said to have written “against those who assert that every man receives his reward immediately after his death, before the resurrection; and to prove which, they make use of the parable of Lazarus and Dives. St. Cyril maintains that the Judgment ought not to be passed till after the resurrection, and that it is absurd to say that the good, or sinners, have received their reward already; and that what is said of Dives and Lazarus, is a parable which signifies only that mer-



ciless rich men shall one day be grievously punished.”—*Ibid.*, p. 438.

*Gregory the Great* (a pope), in A. D. 590, in one of his books, says Dupin, “undertakes to treat of the state of the soul after death, and to refute the opinion of some, who, without separating from the church, doubted whether the soul lived after its separation from the body.” By this we may suppose that numerous believers in standing in the Christian church held to the doctrine of the unconscious sleep of the dead. No names are given, and we are not told that the believers of this sort wrote books in defense of their views. (See *Dupin*, Vol. I., p. 581.)

*John of Damascus*, who died about A. D. 750, refers to a sect who flourished in his day, called the Thnetopsychites, “who,” says Dupin, “believe men’s souls to be like the beasts, and that they die with them.”—*Ibid.*, Vol. II., p. 37. The name of these believers is one given by John himself, and it is not stated that they formed a sect. We have just seen that persons holding this view existed in the days of Pope Gregory.

*Maimonides*, a very learned Jewish doctor, 1131–1202, taught that the wicked would finally be cut off from life eternal, and suffer excision or annihilation of being. This extermination of being he regarded as the greatest of all punishments. He denied the immortality of the soul, though he held that the righteous will live forever. Some of the other Jewish doctors believed in the eternity of hell torments; but Prof. Hudson asserts that this view was never “an accepted Jewish doctrine.” The Mishna makes no mention of the soul’s immortality, nor of eternal pain; on the contrary, soul, body, and spirit, of evil men were

finally to be totally destroyed. (*Debt and Grace*, pp. 335-342.)

*Averroes*, a famous Arabian philosopher in A. D. 1160, "rejected," says Ezra Abbot, in Alger's "Future Life," "the doctrine of individual immortality." Further than this, we do not know his views. He was persecuted for this belief. His views may have been the fruit of the seed sown very early in the days of the Arabian soul-sleepers, won over by the learning and subtilty of Origen.

*Robert Pullus*, one of the schoolmen of the twelfth century, believed that "the torments of the damned may be diminished."—*Ibid.*, p. 384. Whether this view was intended to represent that of Origen and others who had taught that the torments of lost men and devils would finally cease by their restoration, we find it impossible to say. Pullus was an archdeacon in England, and then cardinal and chancellor at Rome, A. D. 1144.

In the year 1270, *Stephen*, a Romish bishop of Paris, condemned thirteen propositions taught by several professors of philosophy and divinity in the University of Paris. The seventh of these propositions was, "That the soul of man as being the form of him, is corruptible." The eighth was, "That the separate soul does not suffer eternal fire." The thirteenth was, "That God cannot give immortality, or incorruptibility, to a mortal and corruptible creature."—*Ibid.*, p. 481. This last opinion is singular. The believers in these views were expelled by the University. Their names are not stated.

*Pope Boniface VIII.*, chosen to the papal see in 1294, appears to have questioned the soul's immortality. In June, 1302, at an assembly of



prelates and nobility in presence of the king of France, William Du Plessis, and four French earls, accused the pope as follows; viz., "That he was an heretic; that he did not believe the immortality of the soul, nor in eternal life; and that he doubted the reality of our Lord's body in the Eucharist."—See *Dupin*, Vol. II., p. 492; also *Bower*, Vol. III., p. 53.

*Duns Scotus*, a scholastic theologian at Oxford, England, who died 1308, and who was a man of subtle reasoning powers, "declared the soul's immortality not provable by the light of nature, and rested its evidence solely on revelation. He thought those who reposed the burden of this faith elsewhere than on the word of Christ, unworthy the Christian's name."—See *Debt and Grace*, pp. 343, 344.

*John Pick*, prince of Mirandula and Concordia, born 1465, a learned schoolman, taught "that an infinite pain is not due to a mortal sin of a finite time, but merely a pain that is finite." Or, as further stated by Dupin, "That mortal sin, as it is an aversion from God, who is an infinite God, is objectively infinite, and deserves eternal pains; but that eternal pains will not be inflicted for mortal sin except when the sin is infinite in its duration; viz., in case the man continue in this sin, and persevere in it through all eternity. For if he repent of it before his death, and continue in it only for a finite time, his pain shall not be infinite."—Vol. III., p. 73, in *Dupin*.

*Peter Pomponatius*, an Italian Christian writer who was born 1462, denied the soul's present immortality as taught in the schools. He says, "No rational arguments can demonstrate either that the soul is mortal, or that it is immortal.

We must, with Plato, refer the question to the decision of God. The divine verdict is as light itself compared with the darkness of our philosophy. Wherefore, past all doubt, we must declare the soul immortal; but not after the method of the wise men of this world, who in their conceit of wisdom have become fools; for he who follows their path must ever wander, I think, and wander into uncertainty." On charge of denying the immortality of the soul, this writer was summoned before the Inquisition, where he boldly confessed he did not believe in the current proofs of the doctrine. He escaped, but his book was burned. (*Debt and Grace*, pp. 345, 346.)

In 1536, *Gasper Contarenus*, a Romish cardinal, wrote "a treatise on the immortality of the soul, against Pomponatius, in which he shows by natural reasons that the soul is immortal, contrary to the opinion of that author, who thought that it could not be demonstrated by reason." So says *Dupin*, Vol. III., p. 389. Some dozen or more Romish writers opposed the views of Pomponatius in published books; which shows the existing fear lest the views should spread through the church. Pope Leo X. had, by the Lateran Council of 1513, declared the human soul immortal, and this belief to be an article of the Christian faith. All who rejected it were heretics.

At the time of the Reformation, these doctrines were not without advocates. There are passages in the writings of Martin Luther that look like a belief in the sleep of man in death. "I permit the pope," says Luther in 1520, "to establish articles of faith for his faithful followers, such as, . . . that the soul is the substantial form of the human body; that himself is the ruler of the world, and



king of Heaven, and God on earth ; that the soul is immortal ; and all the numberless prodigies of the Romish dunghill of decretals" (quoted in *Debt and Grace*, p. 346) ; by which it is seen that the great reformer laughed to scorn the popular faith on this question.

That many held to the soul's mortality, and the sleep of the dead, is evident from *John Calvin's* putting forth a book, in 1534, against the "soul-sleepers," as he styled them. Also, from the fact that it seemed necessary to affirm the popular view in the forty-two articles containing the confession of faith of the Church of England ; in the fortieth of which, relating to souls in death, they say "That they do not die ; that they do not sleep with their bodies ; that they are not deprived of sensation till the day of Judgment."—*Dupin*, Vol. III., p. 497. Among the deniers of the soul's natural immortality, were some of the Baptists and Unitarians, also a sect called the Family of Love. Of the last named, Rogers, in his *Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles*, on page 67, says they held that the wicked dead would never have a resurrection to judgment, they having died as the brute beasts.

*Faustus Socinius*, 1539–1604, the founder of a sect bearing his name, believed in a limited future punishment for evil men, followed by restoration. He and many of his followers held to the unconscious sleep of the soul in death ; and that "our only prospect of immortality is from the Christian doctrine of a resurrection." "The whole man dies ; so the whole man is to be called again to life at the appointed period of the resurrection." This sect held many errors with some

truth. The leader was much persecuted.—*Ency. Rel. Knowl.*, p. 1081.

From this period on to the present century, we propose only to present a list of authors who have questioned the views of the soul's immortality and the notions of eternal anguish for sinners.

*John Locke*, in 1632–1704, in a work on the resurrection, “maintains the annihilation of the wicked.” He was a powerful orthodox, English, philosophical writer, and Hudson says his views were warmly approved by John Le Clerc, a very celebrated French divine of that century.

In 1630–77, *Rev. John Whitefoot*, an Episcopal rector in England, in two dissertations on the duration of future punishment, “maintained,” says Ezra Abbot, “the doctrine of the destruction of the wicked.” His work is bound up with Dr. Isaac Barrows' writings, and has been erroneously attributed to the latter. (*See Catalogue*, in *Alger*.)

In 1644, one *J. Overton* published, at Amsterdam, a work containing 43 pages, entitled “Man's Mortality: Or a Treatise wherein it is proved both theologically and philosophically that the Whole Man is a compound wholly mortal, contrary to that common distinction of soul and body, and that the present going of the soul into Heaven or Hell, is a mere fiction; and that at the Resurrection is the beginning of our Immortality.” In 1655, a new edition was printed at London. It met with opposition.

*Samuel Richardson*, in 1658, wrote and published at London a work in disproof of the doctrine of endless life in pain. We know not whether he was a destructionist or a Universalist. His doctrine was fiercely attacked.



In 1655-58, the great *John Milton* wrote his "Treatise on Christian Doctrine." In chapter xii of Vol. I., he devotes an argument to proving the totally-unconscious sleep of man in death until the coming of Christ and the day of resurrection. The entire chapter is reprinted by H. L. Hastings, of Boston, and is circulated in a tract.

*Archbishop John Zillotson*, of England, in 1690, put forth a volume in which, though maintaining that God had threatened sinners with endless torment, "he keeps the right of punishing in his own hand," and *may* remit the penalty. He seemed to doubt endless misery. (See *Hudson and Abbot's Catalogue*, in Alger.)

On the continent, *Frederick W. Stosch* published, at Berlin and Amsterdam, in 1692, a work of 124 pages, which "maintains the materiality of the soul, and denies the doctrine of endless punishment." Our informant (Abbot) says the book was suppressed by the government, and caused the bold author much trouble.

We notice also, in this century, *Peter Bayle*, the author of a celebrated Dictionary, 1647-1706, who in various places in his work opposes the doctrine of endless torment. (See *Abbot's Catalogue*, No. 3799.)

In 1706, *Henry Dodwell*, an English clergyman of celebrity, revived the controversy in his country by publishing a work of 313 pages, entitled, "An Epistolary Discourse, proving from the Scriptures and the first Fathers that the Soul is a principle naturally mortal." etc. The book drew forth much controversy and a storm of opposition. He was defended in several volumes put forth two years subsequently by *John Pitts*, an English presbyter, who claimed that immortal-

ity was preternatural to human souls, it being the gift of Jesus Christ. He asserts this is "proved to be a Catholic doctrine by the universal consent of the holy Fathers of the first four centuries."—See *Abbot's Catalogue*, No. 2128.

In 1729, there was issued in London an anonymous work with this title: "The mortality of the soul of man, and its sameness with the body, asserted and proved from the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament: showing, that, upon the death of the body, all sensation and consciousness utterly cease till the Resurrection of the Dead."

*Dr. Isaac Watts*, in 1733, "should be named here," says Hudson, "as having held that infants dying without baptism are annihilated." Thus it appears that our great church poet went partly over to a doctrine very obnoxious to many who sing his hymns with delight. (*Debt and Grace*, p. 352.)

*Bishop William Warburton*, in his "Divine Legation of Moses," London, 1738-41, styled the believers in everlasting misery, "the unmerciful doctors;" and seriously inquires, "Doth annihilation impeach that wisdom and goodness which God displayed when he brought the soul out of nothing?"—See *Book 9*, Chap. i.

*J. N. Scott*, a minister of London, in 1743, in two volumes of published Sermons maintained, we are told, "the doctrine of the destruction of the wicked." He is quoted, as thus believing, by Hudson also.

*C. L. de Villette*, in 1748, published a work at Dublin, of which Abbot says, "The author appears to have been either an annihilationist or a Universalist," by which it is clear that he doubted endless torment. The same year a book was put



forth by an anonymous writer at London, in which is taught a dormant state of the soul in death; and the doctrine of endless, torturing punishment is denied.

*Bishop Edmund Law*, in an Appendix to his "Considerations on the Theory of Religion," 1749, startled the English church with his views on the state of the dead. He made death a sleep, a negation of all life, thought, or action; a state and place of rest, silence, oblivion, darkness, destruction, and corruption. His views were similar to those of John Milton.

In 1754, another pamphlet of 78 pages was published in London, advocating the final, utter destruction of the being of the wicked. The author is unknown. But it shows the ceaseless agitation of this great question.

In 1759, there was published in England, in three volumes, "Goadby's Bible." The editors of this work in their notes advocate eternal life only in Christ, and destruction for all the finally impenitent.

*Samuel Bourn*, of Norwich, England, in four volumes of sermons printed in 1760, argued the doctrine of the destruction, in the lake of fire, of all the incorrigibly wicked. He was a faithful and pious minister.—*Sermons*, Vol. I., pp. 371–415.

This doctrine was also maintained by *E. J. C. Walter*, in a work published on the continent at Leipzig, in 1772. The same year, *J. A. Eberhard*, at Frankfort, and *Capel Berrow*, a rector in England, published books in opposition to the notion of an endless hell of suffering for lost souls.

*Joseph Priestly*, in 1777, in a volume of much learning, discussed the relation of matter and

spirit, and maintained the sleep of the soul in death. He was a stern materialist, and his views provoked a long and hot discussion in the churches.

*Dr. John Taylor*, of Norwich, England, the author of a Hebrew Concordance, in 1787, became an earnest advocate of the doctrine of endless life only by and through Christ.

*George Clark*, of London, in 1792, in a volume of 284 pages, entitled, "A vindication of the honor of God; in a Scriptural refutation of the Doctrine of Endless Misery and Universal Salvation," took the other point of the triangle, and ably defended the better view; viz., the total and eternal destruction of all the wicked. (*Abbot's Catalogue*, No. 4065.)

*John Marsom*, in 1794, in two volumes issued at London, vigorously refuted the restorationism of Dr. Chauncy, and maintained the destruction of the lost, who would never receive immortality, but utterly die. A second edition of his works was called for, and issued.

In 1795, a work of 141 pages was struck off, in New York City, in defense of the doctrine of man's unconscious sleep from death to the resurrection. The author's name is not given.

Coming down to the present century, we find *Bishop Timothy Kendrick*, in two volumes of Sermons issued at London, 1805, devoting Sermons two, three, and four, to proving that the soul of man dies with the body, and is restored to life at the resurrection and second advent of the Lord. A bold doctrine for an Episcopal Bishop to assert in those early days.

The same year (1805), *Robert Forsyth*, of Edinburgh, in a work on Moral Science, advocated no future immortality and endless life, except for



the good alone, who render themselves worthy of it. (See *Abbot's Catalogue*, No. 991.)

In 1808, *Rev. Elias Smith*, in the "first religious newspaper published in the world," viz., the "Herald of Gospel Liberty," issued at Portsmouth, N. H., defended the view that immortality was God's free gift bestowed on the good alone through Christ at their resurrection,—all the wicked utterly perishing and truly dying in the day of the second death. Thousands of his followers in the Christian connection, held the same opinion.

A "Member of the Church of England," in 1817, in a work of 240 pages, printed at London, entitled, "Eternal Punishment proved to be not suffering, but privation; and immortality dependent on spiritual regeneration," etc., set forth the better view of man's nature, and the destiny of evil.

*Aaron Bancroft, D. D.*, an author and able Unitarian minister at Worcester, Mass., in Sermons published in 1828, advocated the doctrines of Kendrick, Forsyth, Smith, and others above referred to; viz., endless life through Jesus alone.

The same year, *J. Sellon*, in a work of 106 pages, published at Canandaigua, N. Y., maintained, from Scripture and reason, the doctrine of the final extinction of all the wicked.

In 1834, *Dr. John Thomas* advocated in this country, in a journal called "The Apostolic Advocate," the above doctrines, and that neither Adam nor his posterity possessed immortal souls. Immortality was our Lord's gift, and evil souls would die.

The next year these views were presented in a volume entitled, "Christ our Life," published an-

onymously by a clergyman of the church of Ireland, at Dublin; author unknown.

*Calvin French*, a deacon of the Congregational church, and subsequently a preacher, issued a pamphlet of 54 pages at Boston, 1842, in which he defended immortality as God's gift to the good alone, extinction being the portion of the finally incorrigible, and death an unconscious sleep.

*Rev. Reginald Courtenay, D. D.*, a rector of the church of England, in a London volume of 438 pages, ably written and set forth in 1843, maintained the sleep of the soul, and argued against its natural immortality. A second edition came out in 1857.

*Thomas C. Cowan*, in a work issued at London, 1844, favored the doctrine of the destruction of the wicked.

*John H. Pearce*, at Fayetteville, N. C., in the same year taught in a published pamphlet the sleep of the soul in death.

*Rev. H. H. Dobney*, an able Baptist minister of England, first published his "Scripture Doctrine of Future Punishment," in 1844. A second edition was struck off in the United States in 1856. He maintains the mortality of man, his sleep in death, and the destruction of the wicked.

In 1844, *Rev. George Storrs* stood up in the country to defend the view of "No Immortality or Endless Life except through Jesus Christ alone." He commenced the *Bible Examiner*, in defense of these views, in that year, and also published his "Six Sermons: Are the Wicked Immortal?" which was reprinted at New Castle or Zyne in England, the same year.

Two years later, *Rev. Edward White*, a very



able Congregational minister in England, put forth his "Life in Christ;" and five years later, in 1849, *J. Panton Ham*, his *Life and Death*;" while the same year, *Sir James Stephen*, Regius Professor at Cambridge, England, in "Essays," maintained these views. They refute eternal pain, and avow their belief in endless life only for the good and pure.

*William Glen Moncrief*, of Scotland, in 1850; *Thomas Mitchel*, of Albany, 1851; *J. H. McCulloch*, of Baltimore, 1852; *S. C. Chandler*, of New York, in 1853; in large volumes defend the doctrine of the sleep of the dead and destruction of the wicked, while the able *Dr. Kitto*, in his "Journal of Sacred Literature" for April, 1853, teaches the sleep of the soul from death to the resurrection. In Germany, in 1861, *Hermann Schultz*, in a book maintained the soul's natural mortality and the destruction of the incorrigibly wicked.

Mention should be made in this connection of the writings of the late *Prof. C. F. Hudson*, of Cambridge, Mass. During the latter part of his life he became interested in the subjects of future punishment, nature of man, etc., and traveled extensively, visiting libraries, and consulting with literary men; and some of the fruits of his research were given to the world in an elaborate volume entitled, "Debt and Grace, as related to the Doctrine of a Future Life;" which was followed by "Christ our Life: The Scriptural Argument for Immortality through Christ Alone;" and some minor works. "Debt and Grace" is a volume of several hundred pages; and "Christ our Life" is an able work of 164 pages.

We have not yet named *John Foster*, of England, who doubted eternal pain, nor *Archbishop*

*Whately*, who leaned toward the sleep of the dead. These giant minds should not pass unnoticed.

In conclusion, we observe, that so rapidly have these views spread in this country since twenty-five years ago, that besides a body of from 75,000 to 100,000, so-called Adventists, with a ministry of full 500, there are some eight or ten papers and periodicals all advocating them at the present time, with books, pamphlets, and tracts, maintaining them, scattered everywhere as forest leaves. In 1862, *Prof. Hudson* reported over forty evangelical clergymen of the great denominations, among his personal acquaintance, who held the views, while the *Methodist Home Journal*, *The Advance*, and other church organs, admit that the doctrines are permeating all the churches. In England, the views are creating great discussion; *Rev. Samuel Minton* having recently embraced them, and *Rev. Edward White* engaged in vigorously reviving the controversy. One journal in that country defends them. The views are taking deep root and spreading far and wide among all thinking, studious believers. We do not claim that they have been the faith of the Catholic party in the church, but our evidence utterly divests them of the charge of novelty.

D. T. T.



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
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